



BOOK SHOPS
HOW TO RUN THEM

RUTH BROWN PARK



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BY
RUTH BROWN PARK

Introduction by
CEDRIC R. CROWELL

*General Manager, Doubleday, Doran
Book Shops, Inc.*



GARDEN CITY, NEW YORK

DOUBLEDAY, DORAN BOOK SHOPS, INC.

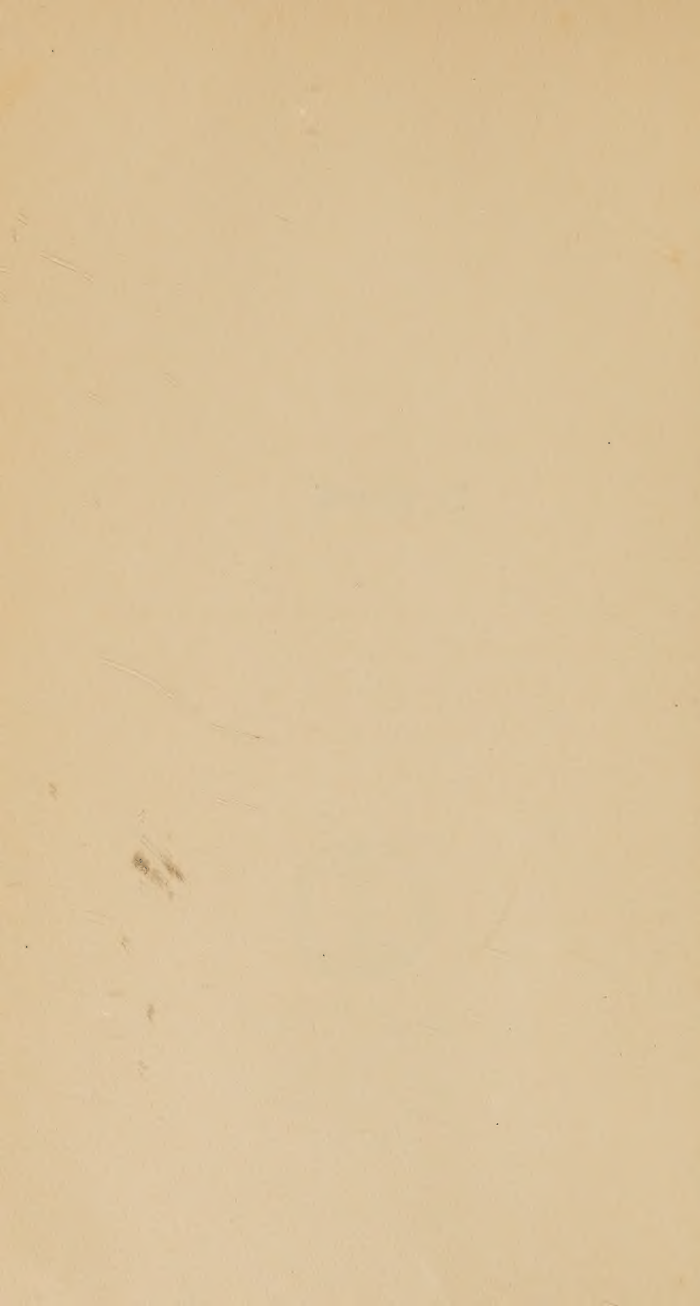
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To Effendi



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INTRODUCTION

FOR more years than I care to remember there has existed a real need for a book on the operation of book shops. Such a book should answer the thousands of questions that arise in the mind of anyone wishing to enter the business of bookselling. It should be a chart for those already embarked on this pleasantly perilous pilgrimage. More than that—it should bring to the general book-buying public some conception of the booksellers' problems and efforts.

Here is the book! Ruth Brown Park, sometime staff member of the Doubleday, Doran Book Shops, has packed into the pages of her book information that is at once sufficiently elementary for the beginner and sufficiently seasoned for the old-timer. She has had at her command whatever of information and experience many successful booksellers could give. Managers, accountants, clerks, and list boys have let her into their particular secrets, and she has presented them in the following pages in a lively style that leads the reader on from page to page, saying to himself, "This is just what I wanted to know. So that's the way they do it. Now I understand."

In my opinion the book will contribute much to making present and future book shops more successful.

CEDRIC R. CROWELL.



BOOK SHOPS

HOW TO RUN THEM

I

BOOK SHOP ORIENTATION

So IT is to be a book shop? You have talked it all over with yourself; with your friends; with your pet dog, and perhaps with your family. You have decided books are your medium for making money. You feel that coal or popcorn or antiques would not be your medium, but that books would. For books, underneath their square surface value, carry realms of further interior interest. You may not only pick them up and hold their solid circumference in your hands, but you may open them, peer into their unfolding pages, and bury yourself in the delights of those pages. Then, when you have surfeited yourself with those delights, you may pass them on to your patrons, *for money*. We know of no other business where a merchant may both have his cake and eat it at the same time. Therein lies the advantage.

*Advantage
of
Book Shop
Ownership*

*Both Have
and Eat
Your Cake*

But you must have a place in which to eat your cake and in which your customers may eat theirs—an attractive, accessible, advantageous place. Now where and what is an attractive, accessible, and advantageous book location?

*A Place
to Eat
Your Cake*

You are standing on a street corner, with 8 per cent. of your estimated sales in your pocket, for rent. You are not going to sink more than that,

*Last Check-
Up Before
Plunge*

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for, if you do, expert computation has found your housing item will then be top heavy. But before you take the final plunge and part with that 8 per cent., make one last mental test—just for security. Ask yourself the following questions: Am I in the right city for the book game? Do I know enough people here to warrant a business venture? Is there a dearth of book shops in this place? If not is there an opening for another shop? Stand still. Think hard. You have thought many times before. This is your last chance. If the old reason then says, "Yes, there is," go ahead.

*Deciding
Type of
Shop*

But what type shop? What will fit in best here? A children's book shop? A general shop? A college shop? A business shop? That decision must be made with utmost care. It is of the greatest importance to see that your shop is the most needed of its type in your city. Sandwich in your novelty where no other of that particular kind has appeared before. Then the public will flock to it and your success will be assured.

*Sizing
Up Your
Location*

You have decided on your type shop. The next procedure is to fit perfectly the glove of location to it. Take a certain "for rent" shop. Stand outside it. How many people are passing hourly, half-hourly; every fifteen minutes? Are there enough passing, enough potential book buyers, to warrant your type shop? Or even are there too many? Sometimes, as in the case of a subway entrance, the impetus of traffic is so great, it blots out all possibility of window shopping. Then trade is lost. Are you on the normal traffic beat? One side of the street often is when another is not. Ways part within the block. Watch out for that. Look at the shops adjacent to the one you are considering. Are they well kept? Do they look prosperous? Go inside and talk with their owners. If your prospective shop is in an apartment or business building, is that attractive? Are you

near the entrance to the building? That is a desirable point, for remember those rental library customers drawn out of large buildings!

Are you in a neighborhood where a good night trade would be possible? Hotel and apartment buildings furnish night shoppers, and night shopping is of tremendous commercial value. At night people have time to loaf and look, and loafing and looking are especially conducive to heavy book buying.

*Night
Trade*

Think much about the all-year-round loafers and lookers, because, if you do not, seaside and mountain shops are going to get part of your business.

*All-year-
round
Trade*

From the customer aspect, shift your mind again to the neighborhood. Then project it into the future. Is this neighborhood under consideration going to improve? Is there a lot of building near by? Or is it well built up now, and would expansion be doubtful? Better the dominant signs of future advancement in a budding neighborhood than a high pinnacle of business activity in a neighborhood approaching one of stultification.

*Future
Possibilities
of
Neighborhood*

After weighing carefully the neighborhood and finding it prosperous at the moment with the possibility of becoming more prosperous in the future, the next step will be to focus your closest attention on the physical appearance of the "for rent" shop. Is it on a level with the street? Will feet, inspired by your windows, lead naturally across your threshold? They will not, if you are below the level of the street or above it. They will if you are on the same level. However, if your window space is large enough and commanding enough, it will temper somewhat the disadvantage of being below or above the street level.

*The
Physical
Appearance
of the
Shop*

Right here not enough words make up the English language to express the importance of proper window frontage. Your windows are your bait. You cannot fish for business without them. Seeing is

*Importance
of Com-
manding
Window
Space*

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believing. Seeing tempting buys will break the financial backbone of the hardest-fisted passer-by. Not seeing them leaves his hand unrelaxed. So squint at your "for rent" shop window fronts unmercifully. Walk up the street half a block. Then turn and approach. Can you stop the crowds with the frontage space allotted you there? Can you get enough display in those apertures to sell your stock? If you cannot, start running and do not stop until that particular spot is out of your mind's reach.

*Compelling
Windows*

You cannot do without compelling windows.

*Inside
Your
Shop*

Taken for granted your windows are compelling, go inside your shop. Is the size of the room too large for the amount of capital you have to invest? Are there columns breaking up your floor space? True, you can build pulpit shelves around columns, places where cash registers and *United States Catalogs* may stand, where books may be wrapped, or seats built. But actually columns play no advantageous part in any shop. Then, if business advances rapidly, is there going to be a place for a mezzanine floor? This is something to consider—a place for expansion, if expansion becomes possible.

*Considering
Ventilation
and
Light*

Will there be proper ventilation and light? Will customers become stifled in this room, leaving before they have parted with their cash, or will they relax in these airy surroundings? Clerks are hampered greatly through improper lighting and foul air. Brains cannot work in a heavy atmosphere.

*Landlord's
Equipment
Responsi-
bilities*

Will your landlord put in proper exhaust and ventilators? How much will he do toward making your windows what you want them to be? If the building is a new one you ought to be able to command the situation, dictating a great deal as to window valances, window platforms, and transoms. If you do not command the situation you are going to pay out from your own pocket big money for adjustment later.

Think very closely about storeroom space. In the book business usually you buy many more books than you care to show at once, for dust and handling are death on books. Therefore, be sure you have a room adequate to take care of this surplus stock. As to cloakrooms—your clerks must have some convenient space in which to place their wraps and belongings. Without it, your first disorderliness sets in.

*Storeroom
and
Cloak
Space*

If after intense thought you decide that the space you are considering is the most desirable you can secure for that eight per cent. of estimated sales, then you will have to think of the following items about the place:

*Physical
Equipment*

1. Window lettering.
2. Awnings.
3. Transoms.
4. Window valances.
5. Window lighting. (*Expert advice in combatting sunlight and securing proper artificial effects.*)
6. Window platforms.
7. Section signs.
8. Door checks.
9. Door hooks.
10. Weather stripping.
11. Shelving.
12. Shelf ledges.
13. Tables.
14. Tabetes.
15. Wrapping and work tables.
16. Counters.
17. Built-in fixtures:
 - (a) *Rental Library files.*
 - (b) *Cash register counters; desk partitions; reference-book pulpit effects.*
18. Desk, chairs, floor lamps, and floor covering.

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A word about shelving: Some shops have found it practical to allow eight feet in all from the base of their shelving to the top. That is—four inches for baseboard, eight inches for cornice, and seven feet for actual shelving. Adjustable shelves are considered best: The lower ones far enough apart to take care of dictionaries and other large books; the top ones for the average-sized book. A good cabinet maker is an asset for designing shelves to fit your particular shop's needs. The National Association of Book Publishers, 25 West 33d Street, New York City, has a pamphlet, *Bookstore Arrangement and Display*, which will be of great help in your initial bookstore problems.

II

STOCKING THE BOOK SHOP

TO THE question "What do I need most when stocking a book shop?" we should answer promptly, "Experience." That, of course, is very encouraging to a prospective book shop owner—an embryonic owner with dreamy, uncertain eyes, who longs to blaze away at once! Nevertheless, it is true. If you contemplate opening a shop for the first time, make your initial investment many months of your own precious time, apprenticing in someone else's shop. Even though you are paid less than half of what you consider you are worth, in the end you will profit doubly through experience gained while working for an old-timer. For, as in any other business, there are innumerable tricks of the trade which can be learned only at first hand, through a veteran.

*Stocking
Based on
Experience*

Armed with at least a small bag of these tricks, you are standing, at last, in the centre of your bare, reverberating shop. You have learned the general order of classification necessary in a book shop. You have approximated the number of books that can be held on your shelves—thirty to every three feet. You know how much money you have to spend and what the discounts and terms of the publishers and jobbers are. The National Association of Book Publishers will send you lists of all publishers and jobbers.

*Equipment
for
Stocking*

Knowing the amount of money you have to invest and estimating approximately the number of books

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*Spreading
Your
Funds*

your shop can hold, the next thing will be to determine which departments you believe will warrant the greatest expenditure and which will not.

*Analyzing
Your
Demands*

To help you to do this, you will have several sources of information. You have the general character of your neighborhood to analyze. Is its tendency commercial or are your patrons more fastidious? Is it apt to want specialty books, or will "best sellers" be the general demand? Go to the public library in the neighborhood. Cultivate the head librarian. Find out from her what she thinks would sell best where you are. Go to other book shops near you. School principals and teachers have ideas on booky demands. They will be helpful, but not infallible; you must make the final decision. Take nothing for granted. Even if your store stands empty a month before you invest one cent of capital, you lose far less than though you buy quickly at random, in order to open at once.

*Through
Simple
Display
Make
Stock
Tests*

Better go slow at the start. Better put small displays of five or six books of a certain type in your window using these as selling barometers, than to rush in, buying large quantities of any one thing. For example, suppose you are uncertain about a sale for children's books. Why not buy a few representative classics and some good modern titles suggested by a competent librarian? Display them in your windows. See what reaction they produce. If they do arouse interest and bring requests for titles which you do not have, you can easily order more at once—and lose very little trade in the meantime.

*Well-
Controlled
Stock
Impulse*

Really, your patronage ought to do a great portion of your stocking for you. They ought to tell you each day through requests, through chats with you, and through their purchases what they are going to want later. So be conservative at first. Enter the business with a well-controlled stock impulse. Enter it as you would a room where you are to be a

total stranger. You do not make many commitments then until you sound out the kind of people in that room. You do not unless you want to be dubbed "a chump." Why make rash business commitments, costing hard-earned cash, before you feel at home in your business? *Remember you can always order books, but you can almost never return them.*

There is one season, however, in the year when you cannot be too mousy and cautious. That is around Christmas. Therefore, it is well that a new business be two or three months old before this important season sets in. Starting in July would give you two months to experiment before you have to place your Christmas orders, and that would be most helpful.

Of course, as we have said before, the type of your store will depend upon the general type of the neighborhood to which you have to appeal. You will stock heaviest in that type. But unless you are to have a specialty shop exclusively, there are certain definite classifications which most shops observe, and which they recognize in their initial orders. Looking over almost any general shop, your eye will light on the following sections: Fiction; Travel; Biography; Poetry; Drama; Belles Lettres; Standard Sets in Cloth; Standard Sets in Leather; specially priced editions—like the Star Dollar Books, the Borzoi Books, the Modern Library; Science Books; Nature Books; Cook Books; Health Books; Sport and Game Books; Dictionaries and Other Reference Books; Fine Bindings; Art Books; Business and Children's Books. In most instances fiction will play the heaviest part, then biography. The others will be edged into prominence as they are demanded. But, to hark back again, your stocking will be continued cautiously for at least six months after opening.

If you are buying for a large business, probably you will visit the seat of the publishers—New York

*July a
Good
Month to
Start
Business*

*Recognizing
Your
Sections*

*Visiting
Publishers'
Head-
quarters*

or Chicago—to choose at first hand. Also you may go to such jobbers as Baker & Taylor (55 Fifth Avenue) and the American News Company in New York, and A. C. McClurg in Chicago. Here, in these jobbers' and publishers' offices, you will find courteous salespeople whose expert advice cannot fail to be beneficial. But if you are on a small scale and are unable to visit headquarters, you will do your ordering through the mails and make your contacts that way. Publishers and jobbers furnish adequate descriptive lists of their titles. Careful selection should be made. And it will be highly desirable to have clear understanding of order terms, clearly written orders, and pleasant association by letter. Start off with keen businesslike correspondence. It does away with a great many errors in transaction.

In stocking, you are on the laps of the gods anyway you look at it—yet—

- (1) Considering your neighborhood carefully,
- (2) Building up your stock through patrons' demands,
- (3) Keeping your balance about general stock—not growing too bizarre or freakish, in the end will make your stock representative and profitable.

III

STORE ARRANGEMENT AND DISPLAY

SEVERAL thousand books; you—the new shop owner; two or three clerks; a few miscellaneous pieces of furniture; a big, bare room lined with yawning bookshelves; perhaps a small cloakroom and stockroom—and what are you going to do with them?

*The
Chaotic
Start*

First, before anything else, if you are to avoid an early financial death, seat yourself on an unopened barrel, and, for the last time, dope out your space distribution. Already, you have gone over the matter when you first considered your shop, but now you must make your final placement. Auction off your shelves to yourself. Decide what space is most valuable and what is least desirable. Decide what stock deserves the most prominent position in your shop, and what can play a less obtrusive part. Decide where your browsing section is to be; where your best-seller group; where your children's books and your rental library. Then mentally place your desk and arrange your chairs. Above all else absolutely form a well-grounded plan of arrangement before you attempt to begin that arrangement.

*Mentally
Organizing
Arrangement*

Now, as a customer crosses your threshold, his eye lights first on the shelf space to the right of the door. This is the window's complement—the initial break between what the window said and what your store has to say. Here should lie "the follow-up" of your window—the vital expression of the general character

*The
Window's
Complement*

of your store. If your patrons are dignified, residential people, this might be a good place for the new biography. If they are the arcade, heterogeneous crowd, sporting books, puzzle books, or late novels might hold these shelves. But remember, this is talking space; don't, from poor choice of arrangement, have it fall on deaf ears. It is your best foot, so put it forward. Certainly an ordinary set of old standards is not your best foot—not even for the most cut-and-dried group of buyers. Nor pocket dictionaries and a few road maps. If they are, then your customers must be hounds for travel. Remember, this space to the right of the door says, "You customers are this kind of people. We put this here, because it voices you." If customers know this, and they intuitively do, they must feel depressed in some well-meaning shops.

*Chief
Display
Table*

Having complemented your window with your display space to the right of your entrance, the best plan is to follow up this keynote in your chief display table. If novels are the mainstay of your buying public have them on a front table, accessibly arranged. Have a placard marked "Late Fiction" and point out through this front table that there is nothing more important to you than the customer's desire for fiction. Novels of all kinds—you carry them. Say through display, "I am a 'novel' specialist. I know what you want; I have what you want; or if by chance I should be out of it, I will get it at once." Thus, if you have analyzed your neighborhood correctly, you have made it possible for your average customer, to get whatever *he wants most*, in the shortest time possible, with the least effort to you and your clerks. Another point: Avoid giving a prominent place to books of a sensational or libellous nature. If you must carry them, at least do not boast flagrantly about it through prominent display. Instead, give the prominent display to popular books

of the moment without these undesirable qualities. Boost these while the boosting is good.

About display tables: If they are out from the wall, with walking space all around them, the best method is to have your display face four ways making the central part of your table the pivotal point (therefore, the tallest and heaviest) and graduate down from that. Avoid flat displays. They cause crooks in customers' necks. If your table backs against a wall, use the wall side as the background and slope down from that. A round table should have its center as the balance and the display go down in spoke fashion. Remember, the more of a jacket you can show, the better. Certainly publishers are expending every effort to produce selling jackets. It is up to the bookseller to aid this effort by featuring a good jacket. Whenever he can show a full book front he should.

Books of one class or of an allied nature should be together. Have as much unity in your table display as in your window. Arrange tables on special subjects, following current events or seasonal holidays. Make the display as straightforward as possible, avoiding confusion. Keep your books in good condition, not allowing their jackets or the boxes containing them to look as if a cyclone had recently passed. No matter how much unity or balance a table may have, if the stock looks tattered you have lost your effect.

Tables should be changed at least once a week. You, yourself, as a shopper, know how bored you become over any stationary display in the stores you visit. So it is important to infuse your tables with a lively interest by showing the public at some time all your stock. To put a new book on a shelf and leave it there would raise at once the imputation of "ugly duckling—shelved before tried." It is not fair, when display, by actual expert computation, has in-

*Display
Table
Arrangement*

*Unity in
Table
Display*

*Importance
of
Changing
Display*

creased sales from 30 to 200 per cent. Facing that fact, begin at once vigorously parading your stock.

In case of your fine bindings, it is essential to keep them in a glass case under lock and key.

If you have a lounge chair or two, it is well to place them where a customer may drop down for a minute's quiet relaxation. If possible, choose an intimate, secluded corner so that a person will not feel as if he were sitting on exhibition in a glass case. Try to have a small taboret near by, with an ash tray and two or three interesting books on it. Often a good sale is made that otherwise would have been lost, because a person has had time to glance comfortably through some book.

As to your desk: It ought to be in a position where you can oversee the entire shop and be easily approached by customers. Many new book shops have special shoulder-high partitions around their desks, with deep inside shelves capable of holding all the necessary office equipment. These open-air offices can either be very attractive or the most unsightly objects in your shop. For example, the top ledges afford display space, an advantage which is often abused. One or two new novels, perhaps a bright pottery vase with fresh flowers, or a notice of a future publication—these are enough. But a number of the personnel use the ledges as catchalls for every homeless object in their shop! This is a great mistake. Don't forget, many customers approach an owner first at this point and form a chaotic impression of him from the disorder. "Special orders," stray dictionaries, loose mail, bedraggled telephone books have no legitimate place here.

Inside the partition on the shelves is a good place to keep all the necessary office equipment. Report and register books, late *Trade Bulletins*, and newspaper book reviews, trade lists, order and telephone books, publishers' card files, general files, blank

*Fine
Bindings*

*Arranging
Your
Lounge
Chairs*

*Placing
Your
Desk*

*Inside
the Desk
Partition*

order cards, charge pads, stationery, pencils, pens, erasers, art gum, scissors, pen points, typewritten lists of book prize winners, such as the Pulitzer and Harper awards; in short, everything for carrying on business in a businesslike way. We beg, if you wish to expedite your business, that you start with organized arrangement, keeping things that belong together in neat piles where you know instantly their location. Undoubtedly this will shorten labor appreciably. Never be out of necessary supplies. Have a wall tablet on which you jot down any "shorts" in office equipment. Certainly the seat of the business should be efficient and orderly.

On the arrangement of your shelves a great part of your turnover rests. The psychology of shelf placement plays a tremendous part in the selling and finding of your books. For instance, your browsing section: This must include the books that customers enjoy discovering for themselves, although, at one time or another, you yourself may have displayed them specially. Obviously it must be a quiet section, where passers-by do not jostle continuously the leisurely buyer. We would include in this browsing section your classifications of poetry, science, garden, health, travel, history, and foreign books, along with essays and fine editions. Here you may object, questioning the space problem, but if you cannot house all these classifications in peaceful sections, at least do not attempt to sell them at the mouth of your front door. In the same way you should use discretion in undercover and delicate subjects, placing them where a customer does not feel he is the cynosure of all eyes—a strong young father buying his first book on feeding an infant is none too pleased to be a target for amused onlookers. Your novels, biography, and children's books in most cases do not need quiet treatment. Usually with these the buyer wants a clerk's advice and quick service.

*Shelf
Arrangement—
Its
Importance*

So have them out and accessible. Your standard sets are generally "calls," as are dictionaries and guide books. You can have these in the back of your store, along with your rental library and game books. Road maps, atlases, and code books can be less played up, except at certain seasons, and remain in inconspicuous surroundings. Of course, all books with the exception of biography, and possibly travel, are arranged alphabetically according to author under their proper classifications. Biography is arranged alphabetically, not according to author but according to subject—thus all bibliography of any one important person is grouped together. Travel may be arranged according to countries instead of authors, though many book shops prefer even here the alphabetical method.

*Lower
Shelves*

In the lower shelves, for reserve stock, exert great care. Usually more untidiness occurs here than in any other part of the shop: empty boxes strewn carelessly about; unused posters drooping over shelves' edges; protruding dust cloths and clerks' private possessions—all these detract from sightliness. Then small pocket dictionaries, guide books, and other miniature editions, become jumbled unless they are kept piled neatly. Besides the unsightliness, the damage to reserve stock is appalling. In England the bookseller avoids this by keeping his reserve stock tied in packages of "fives," not opening until needed. In this country it would be well to put as much unneeded stock as possible in stockrooms.

*The
Stockroom*

Your stockroom, even if limited, should be immaculate. Whoever is in charge, after checking the invoices against orders on incoming goods, should place the books in bins, according to their publishers. A list of publication dates of the more important books belongs here, too. One manager we know has a large hanging notebook for this purpose. On the date of publication of any particular book, the stockroom boy, or whoever is responsible, carries the number

needed to the section where the book belongs. Then he reports the remaining number to the clerk in charge. Now, here in the stockroom should be full equipment for shipping books: strong wrapping paper and string; proper markers for goods; shipping-rate books; scales—everything to insure perfect service on a shipped package. An owner must watch his stockroom constantly, for it is one index to his buying. And he should ask his clerks to make daily visits to it. In fact, everybody in a store's organization ought to feel a responsibility for the stockroom's contents and upkeep.

The cloakrooms in book shops are generally limited. But in most cases each clerk has his own locker with separate key. Urge him to keep his possessions locked in the locker. Usually a cloakroom is a depository for stray powder boxes, woe-begone umbrellas, old shoes, and often, unclaimed books which clerks have borrowed from the shop during off-work hours. Starting each day by going into such confusion is a bad beginning. Therefore, it is wise to devise some plan for keeping your cloakroom in order. Perhaps a different clerk assigned weekly to oversee it would help. At least it would slow down rampant disorder.

*The
Cloakroom*

ADDED DISPLAY ARTICLES

Through small decorative articles, your shop's personality stands revealed. Continuously adding things of beauty or interest should be every bookman's ambition. Among such additions we suggest the following:

Posters, obtainable from the National Association of Book Publishers, 25 West 33 Street, New York City.

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Autographed photographs of authors, obtainable from their publishers.

Woodcuts and etchings.

Bright pottery.

Pots of ivy.

Loaned exhibitions of paintings and etchings.

Posters from the French Railways, 701 Fifth Avenue;
the Swiss Federal Railroads, 241 Fifth Avenue;
the Italian State Railway, 749 Fifth Avenue;
and the German Railroad, 630 Fifth Avenue,
New York City.

Supplies

Each new shop requires a complete list of office supplies. You will need the following:

Stationery:

Letterhead.

Notehead.

Envelopes.

All bookkeeping entry books.

Enclosure cards and envelopes.

Files.

Magazine subscription blanks.

Mail basket holder.

Mark-down sheets.

Order cards.

Order-form books.

The following pads:

Charge sales book.

C. O. D.

Daily sales report.

Weekly stock increase and decrease report.

List order.

Memorandum form.

Monthly statement (for customers).

On sale report.

Overstock report.

Payroll report.

Petty cash report.

Receipt forms.

Scratch.

Paper-rack holders.

Post cards:

Announcing special order arrivals.

Imprinted for general use.

Register book.

Rental library supplies:

Library book cards.

Library membership cards, large.

Library membership and deposit cards, small.

Library jackets.

Library overdue notice. (Double postcard form.)

Library entry book.

Rubber stamps.

Scissors and hammer.

Special order cards.

Towels.

United States Catalogs and trade lists.

Wrapping paper.

Writing and desk supplies:

Pen nibs.

Penholders.

Paper clips.

Blotters. .

Ink.

Elastic bands.

Clips.

Twine.

Pencil sharpener.

Art gum.

Ruler.

IV

WINDOW DISPLAY

Down the street they come—those potential book customers. They are in a hurry. They are rushing along to important engagements. They are flying for trains. They are dashing for home before dark. They are intent upon their own business and utterly unconcerned about yours. Now what are you going to do to break that intent and make them concerned about yours?

*Stopping
Them*

You cannot stand outside your shop with a raised club and demand, "Go in there." At least, you cannot and still remain a public favorite. Nor can you even stand in the doorway and quietly beckon. Not unless you wish to be misunderstood.

No, you can neither club nor call. You must legitimately attract. And your only legitimate attraction at first is through your windows. Later, of course, it is a different story of service and salesmen. But not until later.

Through your windows you must slow down the passing throng. Through them you must stop that throng, and through them draw it across your threshold, inside your shop.

Competition

This, as you can see, is a problem: On either side of you may be attractive gift or clothing shops to lure the shopper. Down the way, a block from you, may be another book shop, older and better known than yours. At the station near-by may be newspaper and magazine stands offering cheaper reading material. In fact, everywhere along the way gruelling

competition probably besets you. Therefore it is up to you to outwit gruelling competition and get the book-buying passer-by through the cleverness of your window display. This is your opportunity, and you must take advantage of it.

How to begin: First, when you yourself are walking down a street, as a stranger in a neighborhood, what is it makes you turn in towards one store window and not towards another? Very probably the effective lighting. The window that is properly lighted hits the consciousness of a passer-by when he is as far as twenty feet from it. If the window is a high, narrow one, the light is concentrated. If it is deep, then the light is evenly distributed. Glare must be avoided through carefully concealed reflector attachments. This is worked out best by illumination experts. But make tests yourself. Do not be satisfied until you are sure your lighting arrests the oncoming crowds. Go outside and send your clerks outside to watch just where the feet seem to start turning in toward your shop.

*Proper
Lighting*

Once you feel your lighting does lead feet toward your windows, the next thing to decide is, what will slow down those feet. And although the average person does not know it, the thing which makes feet first drag a little in front of windows is *color*. Even before a passer-by knows what kind of wares a shop offers, a pleasing color will cause him to glance into a window. In order that a color be pleasing it must be harmonious to the shopper's eye. It must fit in with the shopper's mood. For example, a cool green background, carrying out a note of green in a book display, is pleasing to a shopper's eye on a warm summer's day. It will have a soothing effect as he looks at it and probably slow down his pace perceptibly. But this same display, a cool green, on a day in December very likely will cause him to break into a run. The same is true of warm colors. Employ

Color

orange or red in July—and drive your possible customers not across your threshold but into the nearest soda fountain! Think yourself what colors are compatible with certain seasons; what colors you like to see in particular months, and then what colors repulse you in those months. Buy color charts at stationers. Study booklets on color values. "The Study of Colour," by Michel Jacobs, is exceedingly valuable in this connection. Know what colors go together and what do not. You can murmur, "Oh, the bunk!" but how about those passing feet? Are they *just passing*?

Once you have turned the feet toward your windows through lighting and slowed them down through color, the next thing is to stop them entirely, through display.

Display

Display opens up a tremendous number of avenues. You cannot go down them all. You can only go down one, and that one should be the one that leads straight to the open purse of your prospective customer. Now, no display leads to the open purse of an onlooker unless it touches his desire. He must *want* what he sees. You must have put there in that space allotted to you for bait, the kind of bait that will suit the taste of the person you are attempting to land. Otherwise the sidewalk tide moves on, and with it your half interested onlooker.

Psychology of Display

Therefore, when you first open your shop, take days off to study the type of person to whom you are most apt to have to appeal. By this, we do not mean that down one street walk all the cross-word puzzle buyers and up another all the Post "Etiquette." But we do mean that certain localities do harbor certain definite demands, and you have to anticipate what those demands will be.

If you are in an exclusive residential district, you will not include the same display that you would in a Wall Street window. Or, if you are in a fashion-

able hotel location your bait will be for the élite as against the more general sale of the department store.

Nothing is more intriguing than "hunching" the tastes of the people who are going past your shop every day. The more psychic you are, the more successful you will be in business. No one can hope to stop everyone, but everyone can hope to stop a generous proportion. Because every neighborhood does have a certain average of alike people—"birds of a feather"—and these birds will all have somewhat the same taste in books.

*"Hunching"
Tastes of
Passers-by*

Now, considering that you have analyzed cleverly your passer-by and that you know approximately what he wants to buy, the next thing is to get what he wants to buy before him in the most attractive form.

The consensus of opinion among the most successful window decorators is that the best form of display is the simple balanced, colorful one. Violating any one of these three qualities destroys some pulling power your window might have. For instance—simplicity. You yourself have stood before the jumbled window—the window where there was no single central idea. You have become weary and turned away long before you had digested half its contents. Whereas, on the other hand, you have been face to face with a centralized idea in a window. Every object in that window has had a bearing on that centralized idea. With pleasure you have unwoven the display message. Every object in the window has said one more thing about that message to you—hit *your* especial taste as it were, and you have bounded inside the door of the shop to gratify that taste.

*Best Form
of Display*

As a concrete example of the centralized idea in window display: You are a bookseller. It is summer. You have a large stock and you want to appeal to the largest number of people possible through

*Concrete
Example
of Best
Form*

your windows. What is it that interests the largest number of people in summer? Obviously, travel—either they are going traveling themselves or their friends are going. Or they would like to be going. Your problem is simple: A central idea, an idea woven around travel. Anything that will be helpful to the traveler; anything that adds to the pleasure of the traveler; anything that will pass the time for him. This is what your window should be. Now, first, as a background use panelling of either pale blue or Nile-green cardboard. Then a neutral floor covering of light tan monk's cloth. If the window is large divide it into three parts. The central part, the travelers' helps—a large pile of Baedekers, Satchel guide books, city guides, books on restaurants, books on wines, foreign dictionaries, maps—in fact, anything that will give information to one journeying either in this country or abroad. Then to the right put travel books dealing with various countries, books which are not so much guides to as "flavors" of various haunts. And on the left sport books and novels along with a few magazines to pass the time on trains or on shipboard, or after one actually reaches one's summer destination. Of course, as you arrange the window, observe carefully the balance, color conflict, and the various planes of the window. Flat windows are fatal, so avoid them by gentle graduation down from the back. Placards obtained from the National Association of Book Publishers, 25 West 33d Street, New York City, saying "Bon Voyage" or "Vacation Hints," add to the force of what you are attempting to convey, and one reputable Fifth Avenue bookseller had a small train of toy cars and a miniature ship model further to enforce this travel message. Everything in your window has spelled one thing—"Travel." You have not digressed once, yet you have made a wide appeal. This is having a successful window.

It is well to employ price tags, especially when you are displaying an item at a special price or introducing a new series at a low price (Star Dollar Books, etc.). People hesitate often to come in to ask prices; if the price is told in the window, and it is reasonable, usually they will purchase.

G. R. Turner, Bookseller of St. Louis, writes:

"Explanatory window signs are of great value. They help clinch your sale by making it easier for the passer-by to select the books he wants according to his pocketbook. Every centralized idea should consist of more than piles and pyramids of books of a certain kind, neatly piled; they must have an explanatory sign, giving a brief summary of the book's content and the price. For example, a pile of *The O. Henry Prize Stories of 1927*, chosen by the Association of Arts and Sciences—A pyramid of these books in the window means little, but a neat card bearing the legend

*Price
Tags*

Signs

\$850.00
WAS AWARDED THE THREE
WINNING STORIES IN THIS
VOLUME

FIFTEEN MASTERPIECES
OF
THE AMERICAN SHORT STORY
\$2.50

sells the book."

Publishers and jobbers also back you by furnishing attractive posters or cut-outs for some of

*Tie-up
with
Publishers
on
Display
Material*

their publications. It is only courteous to use these if they possibly fit in with the general spirit of your windows. If they do not, the fair thing is to return them at once (many of them cost several dollars), or at least notify the publisher, through his salesman, why you are unable to use them. It is also a very good plan to follow up publishers' newspaper advertising in the plots of your windows. There is nothing like the actual sight of a book to sell it. Hearing or reading about it, then seeing it "in the flesh," clinches the bargain.

If you coöperate with a publisher and do a special window on any particular book be sure you know exactly how many of that book he has sent you on consignment. Every consignment is a potential liability until it is returned, and, like other orders, should be charged to your Purchase Budget.

It is well to tie up with theatres in selling published plays or movie books. Photographs of the actors and scenes from the recently published play make an attractive display.

*Further
Window
Schemes*

Now following up particular current events of moment is another good method of display. With the birth of so many new world heroes it would be a fitting time to introduce some of the old satellites. Fascinating biographies of both old and new world heroes can stand side by side, along with modern clippings of interest and old facsimiles of historical matters of note. Use your windows to sell the idea that great men and women of history were great readers. Signs along this line are beneficial.

*Seasonal
Displays*

Then, of course, there are the seasonal displays: New Year's Day, Lincoln's and Washington's birthdays, St. Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, a Spring window, Easter, Graduation, Brides, Children's Book Week, Thanksgiving, Christmas. In each one of these monthly displays, there is a wide chance for gift appeal. Are we working half hard enough to land

birthday, graduation, and bride gifts? It is a positive fact that a bride will receive twenty-two silver jelly dishes and not one book. Good salesmanship on the jewelers' part, but awful neglect on the book-seller's! Play up the June bride window for all you are worth. Make your sets and rare editions speak for themselves. Make them the smart thing for the bride to receive. She will thank you, and, incidentally, your sales will bulge.

Watch your windows, not only weekly and daily, but *hourly*. One of the most successful booksellers we know says that if by noon a new window is not selling he changes it. If not entirely, at least in some respect. He never allows his windows to lose money for him. He works until a display does sell. One good way to raise the selling power of your window is to inject a cheap edition now and then. Something like the Star Dollar Books of the Garden City Publishing Company or the Modern Library; the Borzoi Classics of Knopf; and the reprints of popular fiction. In one week-end a certain New York shop sold through display one hundred and twenty copies alone of the Modern Library. So prod the public with desirable buys. Often the reason books lie on your shelves unsold is through lack of display. Pump the blood of display through your entire stock and see how vital it becomes.

If you yourself are alive and on the *qui vive*, watching for every chance to make your stock talk, your windows will reflect this same vitality. Windows reflect the personality behind them. Therefore, don't let yours reflect any atrophied qualities.

If you don't want these undesirable qualities in your windows:

Don't overcrowd them.

Don't have clashing of unseasonal colors.

Don't have conflicting ideas.

*Hourly
Window
Vigil*

*The
"Don'ts"
of Window
Decoration*

- Don't have flat windows. Build them up highest at the back, graduating down toward the front.
- Don't make it difficult to read their titles.
- Don't have torn covers on display books.
- Don't have soiled window hangings.
- Don't have dust on the floor of your windows, or dirty placards and posters.
- Don't arrange books in fanciful groups so that it is difficult to read their titles.
- Don't violate balance.
- Don't allow your various window fixtures and trimmings to lie around when not in use. Try to keep them in a cupboard under lock and key.

Posters, announcement cards, seasonal cut-outs, publishers' cut-outs, vases for flowers, pasteboard backgrounds in various colors which can be hung by small thumb tacks, book ends, clippings, photographs, miniature models of vehicles—all these things add to the attraction of your windows.

*Equipment
for Window
Display*

Monk's cloth for curtains and floor covering is serviceable, though you may have alternate hangings of velours for more formal display.

Occasionally small tables or glass-topped stands are used.

All this must be used by your window helpers with the utmost care.

G. R. Turner of St. Louis writes further:

*Further
Notes on
Display*

"Keep a file box for all successful signs and refer to it month by month. Never let an opportunity go by to tie up with some event—local or national—in your window display. Make your window card talk to the passers-by for you. You cannot do it inside the shop. When a new stock of imported bindings comes in give exhibition space in your window as well as in your shop. Send out engraved invitations to *the best people*. Get a few jewelled bindings on consignment,

samples of leather used, et cetera. Take orders for Christmas, also for special books to be bound. Results will be gratifying. This exhibition has worked very successfully for art books and for rare and limited editions."

As we have said already, each new shop must pick its own type of display and have its own particular expression, according to the character of the people who frequent its neighborhood. The following are some notes on the methods of decoration used by a diversified group of successful shops:

*Various
Methods
of Window
Display*

A Fifth Avenue Department Store Book Shop, New York City.

*Fifth
Avenue
Department
Store Shop*

Ties up book display with other departments in store. Example: For garden book windows, use garden furniture, garden tools, seed, etc. For travel book windows employ suitcases, golf bags, steamer rugs, to carry out ideas. It is important, however, to say when using extraneous display, "Primarily, this is a book window."

This shop must appeal mostly to women, therefore children's books and fiction displays are essential. Inspirational books in dull, depressed financial seasons, sell well. Seasonal displays are followed religiously.

An Arcade Shop in the Grand Central Station, New York City.

*Grand
Central
Terminal
Book Shop*

Wide appeal imperative on account of heterogeneous passing crowd.

Constant change advisable, with frequent stress on cheap editions.

Estimate 40 per cent. of store sales through windows.

The lighting excellent—shop standing out against other near-by arcade shops.

Rental library display essential.

**Lexington
Avenue
Shop**

An Exclusive Lexington Avenue Shop in a Very Fine Hotel Building, New York City.

Appeals to the élite buyer.

Sporting books featured.

Smart novel.

Books on interior decoration.

Books on the arts.

All exclusive and sophisticated books.

**Pennsyl-
vania
Terminal
Shop**

An Arcade Shop in the Pennsylvania Station, New York City.

A wide appeal necessary on account of variety of customers. Both transient and permanent patrons.

Vital, centralized ideas used constantly, and great individuality displayed. Color, great feature of decoration.

Large use of publishers' display material.

Balance observed constantly.

**Madison
Avenue
Shop**

A Madison Avenue Shop in an Exclusive Residential Section, New York City.

Keynote—dignity, yet not too dignified to be interesting.

Conservative, well-written novels best sellers.

Good field for children's display.

Fine bindings and first editions go well.

**Wall
Street
Shop**

A Wall Street Shop in Downtown New York.

Appeal must be to men.

Central ideas employing business and biographical books used.

Adventure and detective stories profitable.

Travel books in demand.

Robust windows essential.

A Well-Known Shop in the Grand Central Terminal District, New York City.

*Heart of
New York
Shop*

Appeal must be to successful, well-educated business people.

Recent travel, biography, and good fiction are needed.

Chance, also, for an exclusive clientele, catering to a fastidious taste. First editions, fine bindings, and art books displayed, along with lent collections of modern paintings and etchings.

An Uptown Shop in a Large Hotel for Women, New York City.

*Hotel
Shop*

Appeal to the intelligent, modern woman.

Late novels, popular biography, and belles lettres, especially good.

Rental library profitable.

A Community Book Shop, St. Louis, operated by the Junior League Club of that city.

*Community
Shop*

Children's books, particularly good.

Smart popular publications.

Appeals to women especially.

Fiction and popular miscellaneous publications good.

Rental library essential.

At Webster Groves, Missouri—a suburb of St. Louis, a small shop in a former gas-filling station.

*Suburban
Shop*

Popular publications in both fiction and non-fiction.

Rental library flourishing.

For further suggestions and valuable data on windows see John Hotchkiss's practical chapter on window display in his manual (published by National

Association of Booksellers, New York City). Here you have excellent suggestions for timely and productive windows by an expert. Especially recommended are his sample window cards. They are exceedingly worth while, particularly those giving seasonal displays.

V BUYING

*Importance
of Buying*

*Purchase
Budget
Adherence*

BECAUSE buying can either make or break a shop, it is one of the biggest problems confronting any bookseller. Good buying from the start will lay the solid foundations of a store, but bad buying will undermine it almost immediately. Therefore, good buying is imperative. To give as many practical working suggestions for good buying as possible we have interviewed seven or eight successful book buyers and made the following digest of their opinions:

First and foremost some well-conceived purchase budget estimate should be the guiding star of every buyer. This you have compiled for yourself carefully, either through following the scientific methods suggested by Cedric Crowell, page 99 of this book, or by some other equally effective method already known to you. But no matter what method you have embraced, this budget has estimated accurately the amount of average stock necessary for the particular neighborhood in which your shop is operating; the money you will need to spend each month, in order to keep your stock at that desired amount; and the amount of goods you must sell each month to warrant the expenditure of that money; then, the profit you must make each year, in order to run a paying business. Not to confine yourself to this estimate, insuring a balanced amount of stock and capital on hand, is to court sure financial ruin. Not to know every day and every hour, the exact relationship between the books on your shelves, your probable

sales and the money in your bank, is the first step toward that least desirable of all states, bankruptcy. Therefore, once you have a working budget stick to it with an adherence that reminds one of the plasterers Johnson and Johnson so ably manufacture. Refuse to be pleasantly imaginative. Cling with grim determination to your mapped-out financial course. In the end you will thank your stars for your determination and incidentally add a substantial balance in your bank book.

DON'T BUY MORE THAN YOU CAN SELL.

*Budget
Possibilities*

Now, following your budget closely, the next step is to stretch it to the limit of its earning capacity. Anyone can jog along, hit or miss, merely ordering books, but it is the person who buys with the ferret's eye for profit who is outstanding.

*The
Meaning of
Good Buying*

Having estimated accurately the amount you may spend, good buying means getting at the lowest price available the books you can sell quickest to the most satisfied group of customers.

*The
Meaning of
Bad Buying*

Bad buying is stocking up with books which do not meet customers' tastes and which therefore have a slow turnover.

Turnover

Technically, turnover is the relation of the cost price of books sold annually to the average cost price of books on hand. See section on Accounts and Records for further information.

*Fast
Turnover*

"Here to-day, gone to-morrow." That is fast turnover. And in turnover lies the real profit. Leftover is the loss. But while carrying books which move rapidly do not neglect the stock, which has an essentially slower turnover but which must be carried. Every store must have a representative stock to succeed.

*Slow
Turnover*

"The poor are ever with us." Poor selections for your clientele produce slow turnover. Slow turnover is money tied up in books which ought to be realized money, invested in other books.

Desired book turnover is money rolling in from sales of books turned on the average from three and a half to four times a year to be reinvested in further fast turnover timber. That means that some books will have to be "turned over" monthly.

*Desired
Book
Turnover*

A buyer should equip himself with every weapon necessary for good buying. These are some of the suggestions: Magazines which forecast styles in reading; publishers' announcements which foretell the whole market story; *The Publishers' Weekly* and *The Retail Bookseller*, which also forecast books; general newspaper reading which reveals current matters of moment; theatre and movie going, which reflect the present popular public taste; reading advance copies of books when furnished by publishers or jobbers; close study of cumulative daily and monthly reports—(what were last year's sales? Is business ahead or behind last year?); notebooks with seasonal buying reminders.

*Tools
for Good
Buying*

CARD RECORD OF STOCK

Author							
Title				Subject		Fiction	
Edition							
Publisher				Selling Price		2.00	
Date		12-5-5	12-20-5	1-1-6			
Stock		2	2	1			
Date	11-5-5	12-6-5	12-20-5				
Order	25	50	15				
Discount	(whatever it is for each purchase)						
Date							
Stock							
Date							
Order							
Discount							

Another invaluable weapon is the card record of stock used by many successful buyers, which tells the

*Importance
of Order
System
Card*

complete story of their buying. This is a library card filed alphabetically by the author's surname under his proper publisher, with one book title to a card, also alphabetically arranged. On this card is a place to enter the date and number of copies ordered on a certain day, and also, when checking, a place to note the exact number in stock on that particular day. In this way the plain history of the book is before you without any imaginative estimates. There are several advantages to this: First, suppose a publisher's salesman comes in to see you. He has a new novel to show you. He asks on the strength of the author's last novel that you buy, say, one hundred copies. You take out this author's card. You bought fifty copies of his last book and still have ten left. You present the card to the salesman. What better evidence do you need to prove to him that you cannot use one hundred copies this year? This card silences all argument. Then, this card is a good stock trainer for your clerks. As they check it with the stock they become familiar with titles they might otherwise have missed.

*Further
Card
Record
Advantages*

These cards also tell many buying tales for your own private information. They show, perhaps, that short stories do not sell well in your shop, but romantic novels make good money. Biography is, perhaps, a poor seller for you, but travel books are in demand. Perhaps poetry is steadily advancing, while science books are moving more slowly. The story is there before you for all branches—in the orders and reorders indicated. Watch the matter of reorders most carefully. *Beware* of them. The favorite book of one day—and by that I mean the favorite book of either clerk or reader—is pushed aside by the new favorite of another day. For this reason, go cautiously.

*Analyzing
Your Shop*

Now, knowing where you stand financially, what you have spent, what you have left to spend, and

having records of what is selling and what is not, the next step is to analyze your shop from the ground up. Sitting back behind your desk while your shop is in full working swing, take time out to consider what your shop stands for on that day, at the very moment you are considering it. First, what is the general personality of the shop? Is this personality compatible with the locality in which the shop stands? Is it too commercial, perhaps, for that neighborhood, or not commercial enough? What kind of people is it attracting, and are the books in keeping with those people? Or *are* you attracting people? If not, what do the people passing look as if they *would* buy? What would make them comers-in, not passers-by? Are your clerks the kind of clerks for your store's neighborhood? Are their personalities in keeping with your customers'? Are you getting suggestions from your clerks? Are your "want" and "short" slips from them adequate? And are you studying these slips like a hawk in order to gauge your public's needs? A careful digest of these slips may prove your buying to be all wrong. The character of your shop may not be right for your neighborhood. It may have been right last year and the year before, but not this. One buyer tells us that only by anticipating the yearly change in the personality of her store has she been able to make a continuous financial success. This same buyer says, "Be objective, not subjective in your buying." In other words, get your customer's personality into your shop—your customer's tastes—not your own. If your customer's taste is for caviar in reading, all right, have caviar. If not—even though you yourself be a caviar fiend—lay off. Only as you feel the pulse of your public's desires, will you be a real buyer.

Having formulated your idea of what your patrons want, you are now face to face with actual

*Face to
Face with
Actual
Buying*

buying. The publisher's representative, his salesman, is before you. Probably you have certain general subconscious feelings about the firm he represents. The books they publish are the de luxe or the bread-and-butter books of the trade. They are of high or low literary status. As publishers they are satisfactory partners, giving fair discounts, or they are the less satisfactory, with whom to go slow. Then, too, you have certain ideas about the salesmen themselves: Are they oversellers, trying to force things on you which make your stock top-heavy? Or are they honest and accurate estimators of what you can actually do with their books? Have you confidence in them, or do you have to divide what they say by half? This is for you to decide, but decide impersonally without being swayed by complimentary lunches and fancy cigarette tributes. If you do not, you may be "stuck" when least you expect it. It may even be a conscientious salesman who tries to advise you. But, conscientious or not, always act on your own best judgment, for either you know more about your business than an outsider or you ought not to be head of that business. Always ask them the following questions: What display material are you going to furnish? What publicity matter in the way of circular or imprinted postcards? What special promotion advertising? What local advertising and how much? And an added word of caution: Do not become wildly enthusiastic over one publisher's list, spending all your allowance at one clip. Remember, there are many representative books coming from all the other publishers. And at Christmas time guard against overstocking. Call to mind that the market for selling is reduced by half after the holidays. Then, how can any buyer anticipate far ahead how the public trend of taste will go?

Sometimes a reprint has tremendous merchan-

dising possibilities, and if properly handled can be promoted without necessarily cheapening a shop. One small book shop sold more than a thousand copies of the *Sorrell and Son* reprint.

*Buying
Reprints*

When once you have decided a book has some selling possibilities for you, the following questions will be well worth asking yourself: Is it well made? Has it a selling jacket? Is it too long a book or too short for the subject it covers? Has the subject been overdone recently? Is the author well known? Is the subject a popular one? Is it timely? Is it too high priced? Is it in the present literary vogue? Is it your shop's type? Do you like it personally or do you see it objectively? Will it carry itself by its own momentum or will you have to push it all the time? Will it have merely flashing popularity or will it increase in popularity as it ages? Will your clerks like it and push it? Has a successful or an unsuccessful movie been done of it? Has it been published serially? What did the last book by the same author do? Will the book be backed by advertising? How much? What does this publisher do to help you sell his books? Do you have to carry him or does he carry himself? Are you overstocked on this subject? Or is this book the most representative of a wide group on this subject? Having asked yourself these questions and having decided that the book stands up under them, the next move is to secure the number you desire at the best possible discount.

*Actual
Buying*

When buying miscellaneous books, especially art books, fine bindings, et cetera, ask yourself, To whom can I sell this book? Will Mr. X want it? Your customer list will help you particularly in this.

*Miscellan-
eous Titles*

Right here a word should be said about *adequate* ordering. Some buyers order in dribblets, losing their best discount and incurring endless red tape for themselves and the publishers. Make your initial

*Ordering
Adequately*

order on any plausible book adequate for at least thirty days, thereby earning the larger discount and cutting down constant order routine. Of course, no one urges plunging on a book to save a few cents discount—two or three unsold copies can knock the eye out of any profit to be gained this way. But looking ahead and judging sanely is every shrewd buyer's task. Otherwise you may find yourself out of stock on a book of which the publisher is also out of stock. Also, it is advisable to remember the very popular titles of perhaps six months previous. You should keep at least one copy in stock, as there is usually a straggling demand for them. Buying, whether at a low or high discount, must be with an eye to selling. Good bargaining turns into poor buying unless you can turn your money quickly. Therefore we now come to that dark side of book life—the "plug."

*The
"Plug"*

The "plug" is that eyesore on the shelf which will not turn itself into realized money. It is the poor relation of your stock, which hangs on indefinitely and furnishes nothing to the material profit of your organization. What to do with it? Let it linger on permanently, growing ageworn with handling and dust, or get rid of it at one fell swoop? There is a general feeling among buyers that getting rid of it is the only method. Simply say to yourself, "Here it is. It's my mistake. There's only one thing to do with it." Then have a mark-down sale. Stack these blights in a pile and sell them for a song. But before stacking perform just one last rite: Give your wall-flower an appraising farewell look. And do this in order that you may analyze just what constituted your mistake in this case. It isn't the fact that you made the mistake. Some buying mistakes are expected of all buyers. It is the fact that you may make them again that counts. So, to avoid this, analyze and ask yourself the following questions

about the book: Was the jacket unsalable? Was the author unknown? Was the subject unpopular? Was the story unpleasant? Was the salesman overpersuasive? Did you have your clerks read it and try to push it? Did you read it yourself and get behind it? How much advertising did the publisher give it? Was it reviewed properly? Did you display it properly? Had it run serially? Was it the wrong type for your neighborhood? Was the author exploited without any real merit? Was the author's past book a "flop"? Did you overbuy on the book—or did you reorder too many? Did you avail yourself of the opportunity to return the book, if it was returnable under some special arrangement?

Then, to continue: Was the book cheaply made? Was the price wrong? Did the discount lure get you? Was it perhaps an importation which you had failed to bring to some collector's attention? From out the maze of all these questions you will find one or perhaps many answers which will fit the case—and when you have, you have gone a long way toward eliminating the possibility of making the same mistake again.

However, there is one remedy which we have to offer before leaving entirely this subject of book "plugs." That is—the clerk as the "plug" doctor. We believe if buyers would take infinite pains to furnish clerks with selling remedies for books, those clerks could keep books from becoming "plugs," or, if they had "plug" tendencies, could get rid of them before they became actual stickers. The trouble is that publishers' salesmen relate many salable points to buyers concerning their books which never reach the clerks' ears. This should not be so. A buyer should, when possible, let his clerks watch him buy. A buyer should consult his clerks as to what they believe they could do with a book. A buyer should work hand in glove with his employees, allowing

*Book
Instruction
for Your
Clerks*

them to share some of the responsibility of his buying. If a clerk has said he could sell a certain number of any book he will feel bound to push that book. One buyer we know not only works closely with his employees in buying, but has a special table in his store where all his incoming books are placed each morning before going into stock for the benefit of everyone who sells to see. Here, before business is under way, he gives all the information he can concerning these publications, and here the clerk fixes in his memory every addition to the stock. The importance of familiarizing your clerks with your buys cannot be overestimated. To show them your orders before submitting them to the publishers gives a clerk an idea of what is coming in. Too, it is essential your special order clerk knows what has been bought. Otherwise, there may be duplicates.

As a final summary of the things necessary for successful buying we stress again the following:

Clear understanding and close adherence to a purchase budget.

Keen understanding of the public trend of tastes.

Searching analysis of the personality of your business.

Actual buying—*buying to sell*.

Buying accomplished, instruction of clerks in salable points of books.

VI

NOTES ON SELLING

Suggested by G. R. TURNER

St. Louis Bookseller

These ten condensed points on selling were so well put that, although most of them have been covered somewhere in this book, it seemed a good idea to print them here:

AFTER the stock has been bought, there comes the problem of how most quickly to dispose of the majority of it. No two shops anywhere in the country can utilize the same selling schemes, but there is a general procedure from month to month that can be adhered to by all book shops. The following ten pointers apply and are sure to produce increased sales. These points involve every phase of bookselling psychology. They are not intended to be final, or entirely comprehensive, but on the whole they cover the field fairly well.

1. *Sell two (or more) books to the customer who comes in for one; i.e., sell one in addition to the one asked for.*

Almost every customer knows the title of the one book he comes in to get. Never let such a buyer go out without mentioning a group of titles related to the one asked for, and as far as possible, selling those additional titles. The type of book asked for suggests those to be further suggested.

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2. *Substitute a book in stock for the one asked for, not in stock.*

The casual book buyer usually knows only a title that has been recommended or that he has seen advertised. Often a better book on the same subject is on your shelves. In most cases a substitution can be effected without difficulty. It is impossible to carry every title in stock and always *preferable to sell what is in stock*. We are only too prone to say "We'll get it for you" rather than suggest a similar, and often better volume from stock. To get proper turnover we *must* sell what we have in stock. Of course, an unusually keen knowledge of the contents of your books is essential before substitution can be done *safely*.

3. *The plus sales.*

When the customer has practically finished his purchasing, suggest a *must have* book. Such an item should be small and *popularly priced*, although any additional books sold to such a customer is a plus sale. Usually, the customer will say, "Oh, add it!" The plus item should be a popular book—one that is in great demand, so that the sale does not seem to be forced, but natural.

4. *Use the power of suggestion to the utmost.*

Keep suggesting different titles until the customer is through buying; don't let him rush off with one book.

Keep the customer in the shop as long as possible. People who say, "I'll come back when I have more time," don't mean it at all; that is merely an excuse for getting out without buying. Don't let customers wait until *next time*, sell them *this time*.

5. *Have a group of titles in each classification at your finger's end.*

Go right to these particular titles rather than grope for the first item handy. Don't hem and haw, but *know just what to* recommend. Nothing is more irritating to a customer than indecision and evident lack of confidence. A prepared list of recommendations will give you a surer footing and will impress your customer mightily.

6. *Show the highest priced item first if there are several editions of a book asked for.*

It is impossible to tell the size of a book-buyer's pocketbook by his appearance. Moreover, in many cases the book wanted is for gift purposes. Then, too, a beautiful and expensive edition will so greatly appeal to the artistic senses that the sale is often made before the customer recovers from the æsthetic reaction. Many customers also are unaware of any but a regular cloth edition and will welcome a better copy. So boost your sales by selling a five- or ten-dollar edition rather than a two-dollar one.

7. *Formulate a slogan or a brief sales talk for each prominent title (i.e., those you have stacks of) and use it. Be sure to get one that works. But be careful to avoid the effect of a brightly colored spouting parrot. Your sales talks should never appear studied. Instead, they should have fresh spontaneity.*

8. *Make for yourself new customer contacts.*

Suggest to new customers (as well as old ones) that they call again and ask for you by name. Suggest their letting you advise them regularly about the new books in their line. Remember customers' faces, and this applies particularly to the new customers whom you are anxious to please—*call them by name* the next time they come in.

Nothing pleases a customer more than *personal attention*. Get on as intimate a plane as

possible with your customer, without offence. To be really successful, every book clerk should have his personal following—a group that depends on his selections and comes back.

Every time you make a sale, make a *contact*. Contacts are invaluable in the retail trade, and you must strive for them. There can be nothing impersonal in a successful book shop. Jot down the new customer's name and address—suggest that he open an account and be put on the mailing list. Remember the new customers' likes and dislikes. Chat long enough to get these.

9. *Use the telephone.*

When a new book comes in that you feel Mr. X would like to know about, call him up. He will appreciate your thinking of him and in most cases will buy.

Telephone practice cannot be overemphasized. On the other end of the wire the customer has little chance of saying "No." Very often he is so delightfully surprised that he says "Yes." A post-card is easily dropped in the basket, but you can't get away from a telephone call so easily.

10. *Don't waste time on non-buyers.*

One of every book shop's greatest pests is the kindly chap who comes in to "talk books." These people can be a serious menace to business if you let them. They seldom buy, but, oh, how they can talk! Yet they have to be tolerated because they sometimes weaken and buy a book. But steer clear of them as a rule, when they are in a talking mood. They'll soon tell you if they want to buy anything.

By this I don't mean to cut short the person who has just finished buying and wants to "talk a little." This practice is bad, and one that you must guard against. Still, with other customers waiting for you, you can't afford to talk very

long. Be tactful in this matter, and try to please both customers. Remember, many added sales can be made by avoiding as far as possible the "talker."

N. B. Always adopt the affirmative in selling. Never say, "Will that be all?" Say, "Is there something else?" or "What else may I show you?" Call attention to other departments. If your customer is through buying in your department suggest children's books or the books to be found in some other department.

VII

ADVERTISING

*Who Knows
You Exist?*

You have chosen your location carefully; you have stocked it painstakingly; you have arranged it accessibly; you have filled your windows attractively—and now you are waiting—waiting for those buyers. Down the street they have come; some have stopped as you had hoped before your windows; some even have entered your shop, but many more have passed by, unmoved. How are you going to move them? How are you going to get word to those who have passed by, or to those who have never even passed your way, that you have an attractive shop, overflowing with tempting buys, waiting to serve them? How are you going to speak for yourself, against and above the tremendous roar of other competitive forces in your business?

*Some
Unusual but
Unsuccessful
Methods*

Of course, you could go out twenty or thirty feet beyond your shop and shout the news to the oncoming crowd—you could, until the police force in your city heard you and locked you up. Or you could mütter the news in trains and on boats, or pass the word along in railway stations and subways—you could, but you would not be considered a rational human being.

*The
Rational
Method*

No, the thing you have to do and the thing so far most booksellers have been loath to do, is to be rational about announcing your business existence to the world. And the rational way to-day to announce it is through advertising. Every other successful organization, every other well-known product, every

arrestive individual at the present time usually has become successful or well known or arrestive through some advertising medium. Some trained publicity agent has set out almost before that organization was started, before that product was conceived, or that individual launched, to fix in the minds of the receptive public the need of that organization, the use of that product, or the force of that individual. Whatever *could* be capitalized advantageously *was* capitalized through written announcement. Everywhere, where people could read, they had to read about those particular "outstanders"—made "outstanders" through the deliberate plan of some clever advertising psychologist. Whether or not at the outset one cared a tinker's dam about these things, in the end, through consistent repetition and unusual suggestive picturization, one became ensnared.

Take Lux for instance: Everyone—women particularly—can remember five or six years ago when that campaign was launched. At first one was satisfied enough with good old Pears' Soap. One had always used it. One's mother had used it. It answered the ordinary uses of everyday life well enough. Why bother with some new-fangled soap by-product? But as time passed and the ads continued to appear, blankets did look fluffier; hands befouled by dish-water *did* emerge more tapering and white; silk underwear *did* look Frenchier than the French laundries could make them: one began to weaken. Gradually one visualized for one's self this miracle of whiteness and freshness. Until suddenly one day one asked the "naborhood" grocer for Lux and it was all over—one, too, had become a Lux addict. So it went with Lux and so it will continue to go with all those nationally advertised products which have been sold, sight unseen, to the thousands of people who ride daily in movable advertising conveyances.

This Lux campaign, of course, was and is on a big

*The Lux
Campaign*

*Imperative
Need to
Make Even
Modest
Book Shop
Known*

scale; a scale that no modest bookseller *could* embrace; in fact a scale that no modest bookseller *would* embrace. But if, even dripping modesty, a bookseller will consider any form of successful business and analyze it thoughtfully, he will realize it has been made successful principally through its constant assertion, on the parade ground of advertising, that it deserved to be successful.

*The
Curse—
Nonentity*

You may deplore the habit; you may shake your head over the expense and say *you* will never succumb, but if you do not succumb to advertising you will succumb to a far worse evil—that of being a business nonentity, than which and by far there is no more depressing situation.

*Tell the
World
About
Yourself*

So, modest though you are, put on your salt-and-pepper suit of business talk early in the game; adjust jauntily your flashy straw hat of publicity and wave your wand of aggressive announcement all over the place. Then sit down, at your desk in off hours, sharpen your pencils, and get busy to tell the world about yourself.

*Advertising
Allowance*

How much publicity can you afford to indulge in and still not violate your budget? The authorities say from 2 to 3½ per cent. of your estimated yearly gross sales. At first, when you are utterly unknown in the book world, this amount may not be enough. You may have to exceed it. But exceeding it constantly would be fatal and would cause pinching of other store expenditures. So make your estimate scrupulously at the start, and see that as soon as possible you adhere to it. Then aim to have every dollar spent for advertising bear fruit.

*Two
Methods
of Adver-
tising*

To have it bear fruit, you will have to employ the right advertising mediums at once. There are two methods: the direct and the indirect, and you must decide which would be most efficacious for you.

Most booksellers have found the direct method the better to stress. By the direct method we mean the

letter sent straight from your hand to your customer's hand with the hope that its contents will reach his eye and be read. To secure this desired end, it is necessary that the envelope you send be of good quality; that it be addressed in an intelligent, interesting hand; that nothing but your return name and address be on it, and that it gives as much the appearance of social correspondence as possible. Then, once the envelope has been opened, your next task is to make the contents interesting enough to hold the reader's attention to the last word. If this is a general file list, there must be a general appeal. Perhaps the appeal of a day or season—St. Valentine's Day, Christmas, or Easter. Or of an event—a birthday, a graduation, or a wedding. Or of a community appeal—Children's Book Week; or of a cultural appeal—the whys and wherefores of owning books. In each case you must use every ounce of selling psychology you have. You must employ as few words as possible to say adequately what you mean. You must cover your subject with graceful interest if you are to succeed. In other words, you might be called the Madame de Sévigné of the bookseller's advertising world.

In order to live up to the excellence of a De Sévigné letter one must be most careful of detail. The thought must be expressed graciously and entertainingly. It must be on a good quality of paper, with ink that matches perfectly that used on the envelope. If the letter has been multigraphed—and it may be—be sure it is done by an expert in that line. You must "dress" your advertisements as carefully as you word them. Otherwise your expenditures are useless squanderings, sprawling in the bottom of yawning waste baskets.

"That is all right," you say, "about compiling the letters with utmost care. But to whom shall we send them once they are compiled?"

We would suggest for your general mailing list the

*The
Direct
Method*

*The Form
of the
Letter*

*What
Sources
for Lists*

*Your
General
File*

use of Bradstreet's or Dun's; the personal credit-rating book of private citizens, such as is published in every city; the social register; the telephone directory; membership lists of clubs such as the Rotary, the Lions, Women's or Junior League in your city.

*Your
Classified
File*

For your classified file you can secure your names in this way: Have your clerks and you, yourself, carry a memorandum book in which you and they jot down constantly the names and addresses along with the tastes of the various customers patronizing your store. Each day transfer these names to small library cards which you file alphabetically under their classified interests. When any new book of any importance is scheduled to arrive, you will turn to that classification in your file and ascertain what customers would care to be notified about that arrival. Then you can either notify them by letter or by card or by telephone of this arrival. The telephone call is particularly advantageous, for it admits of a chance for salesmanship on your part. You can elaborate on the book's merits, adjusting your description to fit the particular taste of the person to whom you are speaking.

*Varied
Bibliography
Possible
from
Classified
Lists*

Besides furnishing addresses for publication announcements, these lists permit you to work up varied bibliographies on any particular subject in which a customer might be interested. Libraries will help you in this matter, too.

*Necessary
Weeding
out of
File*

Needless to say, these lists must be kept up to date; they must have correct addresses; they should carry notations of advertising results. When a card indicates no response for some time, after one last final investigation do away with it. Why waste postage on unearned results? Far better to have a small effective list on which you can spend this postage waste for further attractive business-producing letters and cards, than to go on and on sending helter-skelter material to lethargic patrons.

Besides your general and classified mailing lists, there is the Children's Birthday List, which has been found most useful. To build up such a list, secure the names and birthdays of the various children whose parents shop with you; then arrange them in consecutive date file. Three or four days before any child's birthday, send a letter to him along with a return postcard, saying you wondered what books he would like for his birthday out of the list you were sending him. Almost invariably the card is returned promptly with the desired books noted on it. Then, in another day or two the parent or relative of the child has come in to select the books and to tell you how delighted the child was to receive a letter all his own from you. This is a very good way to make yourself "the one and only" bookseller for life in that particular family.

*Children's
Birthday
File*

An individual catalog is a great asset to any bookseller and is recommended for those who can afford it. For those who cannot, there are the catalogs issued by The Baker and Taylor Co., and R. R. Bowker Co., listing current books, which are available with dealer's imprint at nominal cost.

Now through these direct forms of advertising, you have walked right up and spoken to the various people whose names were available through the lists. But you may have missed many others whose potential book-buying powers you must secure. To bid for their business, since you do not know anything about them personally, you will have to make a general advertising stump speech—going out indirectly, with the hope of hitting directly. This will be mostly through newspaper advertising.

*The
Indirect
Method of
Advertising*

Newspaper advertising is expensive and deserves careful execution. But whatever you do, do it consistently. Make a habit of advertising regularly in a paper, in the same place, on one or two or three days of the week. Be sure to give your address. Cite well-

*Newspaper
Advertising*

known buildings close at hand. Remove all difficulty of finding you. Then, make your ads so compelling that patrons watch for them—for instance, in the *New York World* of Friday, what booklover fails to look for the "Inner Sanctum" ad of Simon-Schuster? It has become a pleasant reading habit, telling in an individual way the news of their young publishing house, along with notes on the books of importance which they have to sell.

*What to
Stress in
Newspaper
Advertising*

For the average bookseller we should say that stressing any one book is too ephemeral and too limited. Instead, let the publishers stress the particular book, and the booksellers stress all books. Tell everybody about yourselves in relation to the book world in general—not about any one phase in particular, unless it is a big enough phase to pay for the ad itself. Letting the public know about some attractive yet inexpensive edition, which includes a number of desirable titles, might be very profitable. Or mentioning the arrival of a very exclusive line of fine bindings around Graduation Season might pull large results. But on the whole it is the Season, or the Event, or the Special Week, with books suitable for everybody during those times, that counts.

*Manner of
Stressing*

Having the central idea of your ad established, make it simple, balanced, and arrestive. Leave enough white space, even though costly, to give it individuality. Do not attempt to write an essay in your copy. An ad is a short cry, a piercing call, not a monotonous monologue. Each word has to stand for a dozen spoken words. It takes not a little genius to write ads. If you yourself cannot do it, there are one or two ways out.

There is the National Association of Book Publishers which will furnish you helpful material. The American Booksellers Association now has a system whereby for a small sum they will furnish you, regularly, advertising with cuts. Mr. John Hotchkiss has

an invaluable pamphlet published by the National Association of Book Publishers, which will furnish you examples, and most newspapers have copy writers of ads who are quite willing to give you aid. It is no easy matter, this advertising job, so do not take it lightly, and do not let others take it lightly for you. See that every ad you compose, or that you have composed, is representative of you and tells the public what you want them to know about yourself.

Dreary, unindividual, sloppy advertisements are not what you want.

Careless, hastily conceived wording does not sum you up either.

Progressive, intelligent, fastidious service is what you are attempting to give—

So why not make your ads convey that message to your public?

VIII

THE EMPLOYER AND HIS EMPLOYEES

*The
Manager
or Owner,
a Superman*

Now, be it known, first, last, and always, the successful manager or owner of a book shop is no ordinary mortal. For he must have the book knowledge of a head librarian; the book love of a bibliomaniac; the business sense of a Wall Street magnate, and the patience of an orphans' home matron. Added to these things, he must instruct his clerks with the trained vigilance of a Harvard professor and lead them to selling victories with Foch generalissimo proclivities.

*The
Manager
as
Bookman*

About these required superhuman qualities: As we have said, the successful owner must be a bookman. Every inch of a shop reflects the personality of the true bookman. He stamps himself on every arrangement in his store. Over his book tables flood his self-revelations. In his shelves and under them one can see his ideas moving clearly. Not that he has bought subjectively; not that he has indulged his own personal tastes. But *the spirit of the person, his affinity* for books, simply howls at the onlooker. Whether or not this bookman likes a particular book, he picks it up with that tender sense of "It is a book and *someone* is going to like it. Someone *has* liked it in the past or it would not have been published. So it should be treated with respect." He values it properly, with its trade worth, and accordingly sells it to the right person. Even with his ugly ducklings, his "plugs," he is considerate.

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Perhaps, after all, it might not be their fault! He is steeped in book enjoyment; passes it on to his clerks; imbues his customers with it. In short, he makes his shop a place where books *are harbored tenderly; understood intelligently and passed on discriminatingly.*

However, here is the catch. One must not only harbor books tenderly; understand them intelligently; and pass them on discriminatingly—one must do more. One must be gathering in the shekels at the same time. Rents have to be paid; clerks recompensed, and overhead lowered. This is the owner's business. Can he do it? We believe he can, if he will follow exclusively some sound plan of business management, adhering closely to budgets and keeping such slogans uppermost as, "This shop must pay"; "This shop must practice careful economies"; "Buy to sell"; and last but not least, "Develop SUPERMEN CLERKS."

*Gathering
in the
Shekels*

Now, this matter of training clerks is one of the most important branches of shop management. To fail in this, even though one is a real bookman and commercial lion combined, will weaken your store's powers tremendously.

*Training
Clerks*

As head of the shop, the owner must be a leader. He must set the shop standards and live up to them. He must, through his own devotion to his business, inspire the same devotion in his clerks.

*The
Manager
and His
Clerks*

Then, the head of a shop must work intelligently, accurately, and enthusiastically, if he is to get intelligence, accuracy, and enthusiasm from his clerks. Any weakness in his program of work is instantly detected in the store's morale. Therefore, an uninterrupted high standard of work on the owner's part is the only safe one to employ.

*The
Manager's
Standards*

If the caliber of your work as manager is distinguished, you may demand the same type work from your employees. Much book shop work is slip-

*Manager,
the
Clerks'
Trainer*

shod because of the laxity of the manager in holding his clerks to a finished standard. It is too much trouble to keep training a novice in the same particulars until his work is a finished product. But the manager of any shop must start at the beginning instructing his clerks correctly, in each branch of the store's operation. He must not allow them to slide into shiftless methods. It takes patience and time, but it must be done if one is to have an outstanding shop. No matter whether one has one or a dozen clerks, the same careful overseeing must be employed. One has to hammer away until one has a polished clerk.

*Training
for Book
House-
keeping*

So, as manager, start your campaign at once, training in right housekeeping methods. Give a clerk a certain section of your shop for which he must be responsible. Explain to him how important it is to make this section attractive; to keep it always in order and free from dust; to decorate it with appropriate posters and other suitable decorative matter; to see that it is stocked with staple requirements. (You, from your own book experience, can give him a typewritten list of the staple books which *must* be on his shelves, or The Baker and Taylor Co., 55 Fifth Avenue, New York City, can furnish you complete sectional lists.) Explain the general arrangement of the stock; how it is classified and the importance of following the alphabetical arrangement. Call attention to the reserve stock kept behind on the shelves and in the bins. Visit the stockroom with your clerk. Explain the arrangement and attempt to point out books belonging to this clerk's section. Instruct the new clerk in proper dusting methods and furnish him with clean dust cloths. *From the start, make it understood that the care and upkeep of the stock are exactly as important as making the sales.*

For some reason, clerks as a whole do not like the housekeeping end of the business. They skim over

it whenever there is an opportunity. Therefore, to offset any careless habits, a manager must make a practice of going about his shop during the early morning business hours, enthusiastically making suggestions about the arrangement of the stock and the general appearance of sections. Then, generously praising clerks when they deserve praise for their good housekeeping.

Following-up on House-keeping

If a book shop owner will visit other book shops, looking for attractive window and store decorations, and will send his clerks in quiet business periods to visit them, he will inject new ideas into the appearance of his store and correct ugly or unattractive arrangements.

Stimulating House-keeping Interest

Now, the matter of conduct in selling: An employer must instil in his clerks the idea that satisfied customers are the *only* customers the shop needs. He must impress on them the importance of courtesy; quietness; tactfulness; alertness; willingness, and interestedness. He must warn against judging customers by externals. (Some of the world's best book buyers hardly know an arrow collar from a lace jabot.) Then, he must suggest that every customer is practically an invited guest—invited through advertising means to enter the shop. Therefore, a clerk is a host and must conduct himself like a host. Rudeness, abruptness, superciliousness, lack of interest, cannot be practised in well-operated shops. And they are not indulged in where employers make it apparent that these qualities will not be tolerated.

Overseeing Selling Conduct

An employer must watch a clerk's method of selling. Is he an aggressive bookseller, not merely an order taker? Does he appear to be using any psychology in selling? Is he approaching certain types of people as they should be approached? Is he suggesting the right books for them? Is he over-selling or underselling? Does he know his stock or is he losing sales? Often, a small suggestion *made in*

Overseeing Sales

private by the person in charge can correct at once certain wrong sales methods.

*An
Employer's
Part in
Selling*

If an employer will go about his shop, looking for slow-moving stock, giving salable points concerning it and encouraging turnover, in general, it is bound to have the proper effect. If he will have a table where each morning new incoming stock can be placed for all who sell to see—this will familiarize clerks with the new books and stimulate sales. Watch these incoming titles to prevent selling any before the date of publication. For to do this is an unforgivable breach of book shop ethics. No matter what other shops of competition may do, this is not for the conscientious bookseller. If, as buyer, an owner will consult his clerks concerning their opinions of the worth of certain books, this will furnish good clues for buying and increase the chances for selling books. Also, if a buyer will inquire of his clerks concerning fast selling titles, whether they themselves are pushing them or whether the books are automatically being called for—this will be an excellent guide to reorders. Any book a clerk has sponsored beforehand is more apt to be his responsibility later on. In this connection it might be well to issue individual monthly clerk budgets, giving each clerk something at which to aim.

*Stressing
Turnover
Responsi-
bility*

Try to impress again and again on your clerks the fact that turnover is not your responsibility alone, but *their* responsibility. Point out that the clerk is the only continuous connecting link between the public and any book in the store. Unless the clerk has had something to do with the departure of a book from a store—shoplifting excepted—the book does not leave. The clerk is the one to make the stock vanish. Training him to make it vanish is every owner's duty.

Right here, speaking of vanishing stock, legitimate vanishing stock, we must call your attention

to the illegitimate—the stolen book. It is always well to instruct your clerks to report to you, if you are in the shop at the time, any individual acting suspiciously. If you are not there, caution them about accosting anyone—the disappearance of a book or two is not worth any real risk. However, obviously watching a suspect usually foils him.

*The
Stolen
Book*

Be sure your clerks know what is in the windows. Often they look blank when a customer requests a book seen in the window. This causes an unfavorable impression.

In training clerks it has been found advisable to show them the sales cumulative reports. What was done last year on the same day in the same month? Are you running behind last year? Can your whole force get together and by scheming bring the amount up to and ahead of last year? There is nothing more stimulating to business than taking a clerk into the inner sanctum of that business. He feels immediately his greater responsibility—and works accordingly. Talk to him about the budget. Let him learn at once the importance of that budget.

*Admitting
Clerk to
Inner
Sanctum of
Business
Operations*

If a clerk knows that he must sell a certain definite amount to prevent running behind last year's sales he will try to make that added sale which is so essential to profitable business. Warn against merely filling requests. Show how a little sales ingenuity can make the extra sale that will add an extra dollar or two to almost any customer's purchase amount. Teach the clerk the great value of keen suggestion. Point out the folly of wrong suggestion or no suggestion at all. As chief, you must keep your clerks going. They will lessen their selling energies unless they are encouraged constantly.

*Encouraging
the "Added
Sale"*

If you will chat enthusiastically in the slack business hours with your clerks about books you have read; if you will speak about current plays and movies which you have enjoyed; if you will talk of

*Working Up
Enthusiasm
for Selling*

events of moment discussed in newspapers and bring in periodical book digests—if you yourself will be alive and keen about all literary matters, eager to discuss them with your force, you will transmute your eagerness to them and soon set a general standard of intelligent literary comment. In addition to this literary impetus an owner can gain a clerk's loyalty by exhibiting a little interest in his personal problems. Understanding what the other fellow is up against and making things easier for him, should be every employer's determination. Some employers complain they have so much routine work to do, they have no time for mingling with their clerks and imparting any inspiration, book or otherwise. But a clever employer realizes that inspired clerks make the extra sales, that make the extra profits, that make the extra salary for hiring the extra clerk to lessen routine responsibilities. When your shop becomes a mountain of routine to you, and you stand, straining on tiptoe, barely looking over the top or not even able to look over the top, you are well on your way to closing your front doors.

*Analyzing
Your Shop*

When you feel your shop is not up to par find out what the trouble is. Don't sit back bemoaning poor business. Get to the bottom of the matter by thoughtful analysis. Are you buying correctly? Your card record of stock will tell you a lot. A carefully kept notebook of certain selling schemes which you have successfully engineered will also aid you, along with the news concerning the unsuccessful ones. Your "want" and "short" slips will tell you some more. A close study of the books on your shelves will reveal further information. Are you losing sales because you are "just out" of a title? Are your clerks doing all they can to increase sales? Have you furnished them with every means of selling you know? Is your shop attractive to the incom-

ing customer? Is it well arranged as to display qualities, and has it a vital appearance? How about those ancient-looking jackets on the books? (Publishers are usually able to furnish new ones.) What about the dust on ledges? What about messy desks and cash registers? What about your own appearance and your clerks' appearance? Do your windows attract and bring in customers? If not, why not? Remember proper window decorations are absolutely essential. If you are not making great profits from your windows you are letting one of your trump cards go to waste. If you can't find out the trouble talk with other merchants about it. See their window schemes and from them invent new ideas of your own. Even non-book shops often furnish splendid selling ideas. Your windows should give the keynote to your business. *One glance at them and your shop's personality ought to stand revealed.* Concentrate intensely on this until you make your windows bring in paying customers. *There are* paying customers wandering past your shop every few moments of the day—you must, through your windows, stop them and get them in. Then, once in, through your attractive interior and your able sales force, make them your customers for good. If a customer goes out of your store without buying make it a point to find out from your clerks why.

If after you have trained a clerk religiously in all phases of your store's operation you think him unsuited for the book business, don't hesitate to tell him so frankly. Suggest what you think he could do and help him locate the right position with some other firm if he deserves helping. Don't "kid" yourself about your clerks. They either "deliver the goods" or they do not. Why waste your shop's profits in unearned salaries? Why not get returns from every salary dollar expended? On the other hand,

*Determining
Book
Adaptabil-
ity of
Clerk*

if a clerk does earn his full salary—is thoroughly helpful in every branch of the store's work and increases sales consistently—it is up to an employer to advance him in every possible way. Otherwise some competitor will do the advancing for you.

*Clerks'
Smoking*

If your clerks must have a smoke now and again, warn them against indulging in this within the shop or at the door of the shop. Instead, it is well to ask them to leave the premises and take a short stroll, away from the reproving eyes of some customer who might resent the sight of a clerk smoking.

*Publishers'
Salesmen*

In a small shop often publishers' salesmen give customers a very bad impression. They stand around smoking and talking while waiting their turn with the buyer. As they are usually hatless, they are indistinguishable from the regular clerks. Naturally, they do not offer to wait on trade, and many customers are offended, thinking they are being neglected by the store's regular staff. So by all means put a stop to this "village store" atmosphere and tactfully urge travelers to wait quietly in a hatted condition.

*Personal
Friends*

In your clerks' personal friends you have another problem. Some of these people use shops as club headquarters. They lounge in the most comfortable chairs and frighten away legitimate trade. At any moment one expects them to pitch a table and have a friendly rubber or two of bridge. And so far as any record goes no one of these strictly lounge lizards has ever been seen to buy even a pamphlet from a book shop. These are the people for whom you do not want to furnish yearly heat and light. On the other hand, many personal friends spend their book money with your clerks, and for this reason an employer has to use careful discrimination in curbing personal visits. However, mildly suggesting that a clerk do his heavy social entertaining at home will usually slow down the deluge of ad-

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miring visitors! Also, it is well to throw a spoke into lengthy personal telephone conversations; they are anything but businesslike.

In order to sell well a clerk must read copiously. Any bookseller can add many dollars to his shop's sales by encouraging this copious reading. It is a good thing to apportion books among clerks. Let the detective hounds read detective stories. Let the belles-lettres people indulge in their fastidious reading. Let the romantic ladies pursue their favorites. Then, have short clerk meetings and pool your reading harvests. This will prove most advantageous. But while you are passing out this copious reading material, *know* where it is going and how it is being used if you do not wish to be inventory shy. Have some method of checking borrowed stock. Hanging a notebook in your office with a page for each clerk's name and columns for the dates of withdrawal and return is a good method. However, whatever method you employ, be accurate and charge the clerk for any unreturned books.

*Taking
Home
Books*

To save overhead one must watch telephone and light bills. For personal telephone calls there ought to be a charge to every employee. Sometimes light is needlessly wasted in cloakrooms and stockrooms.

*Telephone
Charges
and Other
Economies*

Often it is possible to secure certain authors for special days of entertainment in your store. If the author has an attractive personality and will read some of his work or will talk well of people and things, this is advantageous. *Any legitimate means of getting your shop before the public is worth while.*

*The
Manager
and Store
Entertain-
ments*

A SUGGESTED PLAN OF ROUTINE PROCEDURE

The importance of training your clerks in all the routine operations of the shop cannot be overesti-

*Training
in Routine
Matters*

mated. No owner knows when illness or some other unexpected event will take him from his shop. He should be prepared for this and have a fully trained person ready as his understudy. Besides, every employer should use the potential help stored up in his clerks and not attempt to carry on alone. Mr. Cedric Crowell, general manager of Doubleday, Doran Book Shops, Inc., writes to his shop managers on this subject as follows: "Constantly instruct your assistants so that they can take up the reins if you are ill or if you are transferred to a better position. Familiarize the personnel with all phases of operating a shop so that they will be 'equipped to fill managers' positions in any of our shops if the opportunity presents. We have the obligation to make each of our personnel more productive for his own good, for our good, for the good of the trade, and for the general social good." And in this matter of routine training, it is absolutely essential that an owner present finished work himself. If reports are sloppy or inaccurate, if they are tardily executed, if they do not give correct information concerning your business, what is the point of passing on this sloppiness and inaccuracy to still another person? Merely added trouble!

*Apportion-
ing Work
Among
Clerks*

It seems a good method in organizing your shop's work to give definite instructions in each operation to all your clerks and then choose the one who is best fitted for any particular operation, for that operation.

*The
Cash
Register*

Each clerk must use constantly the cash register, but the owner or one trustworthy clerk from your group should be in charge of it. The following instruction is suggested:

Show every new clerk how to use the register. This does not include the errand and stockroom boys, who must not have easy access to it. Don't unnecessarily place temptation in the way of young-

sters. Give each clerk his own register letter; then let him do a few practice sales with you. Watch him carefully for a week or two to see he is being accurate.

Point out to him the necessity of announcing to you at once any mistakes he has made in ringing up sales.

Point out how necessary it is to watch the cash register indicator, which the person in charge of the register sees is always visible.

Stress the importance of naming denomination of bill given in cash transaction; of ringing up sales *at once*, and of counting out loud the customer's change. A clerk must be accurate about the cash register.

Have him watch out for two-dollar bills in place of ones. Have him put bills in their proper places, in the register.

Have the person in charge of register change the date daily.

Have him clean the register periodically.

Have him watch and change the tape in the machine.

Have him check balance daily, after which you yourself re-check.

Have him get clean money from your bank for making change.

Have him learn to set back the cash register each month after you have taken the reading.

The matter of I. O. U.'s is, of course, under your jurisdiction entirely, though, we believe, the ideal condition would be no I. O. U.'s. However, if a clerk wants to borrow a small sum of money from the cash register and you permit it, see that he places his I. O. U. in the cash drawer and that he returns the money only to you. This is an important rule and demands absolute adherence if your cash register is to be held inviolate.

*Duties of
Person in
Charge of
Cash
Register*

*Disposition
of I.O.U.'s*

*The Daily
Bank
Deposit*

It is well to make a daily bank deposit at a near-by bank. This deposit includes the preceding day's business in cash. (All sales and rentals; library deposits and money received on account.)

*The Charge
Sales
Transaction*

The charge-sales transaction is not difficult to explain. First, have a new clerk always verify the customer's name and address from the alphabetically arranged charge-account list which every store should have. (A charge-card catalog is at hand for clerk's verification.) If the charge is O. K., then have him write distinctly on the charge pad the name and address of the customer, printing it if necessary. Have him write accurately the title and price of book. If the customer is taking the book, have the customer sign the charge slip. In a large shop the owner or his chief assistant also O. K.'s it. Then have the clerk place the original slip in the cash register drawer kept for charges and the duplicate slip in the customer's parcel. New clerks usually make out clearer charge slips than old clerks. It is a good method to check up on this occasionally and exhort the old clerks to brace up. Endless time is spent by the person who has to make out the monthly charges, because of careless handwriting on the clerk's part. If the charge proves to be "N. G.," the floor manager can usually help the clerk out by simply reminding the customer his account is very much in arrears.

*New
Accounts*

In opening new accounts it is well never to charge anything until the account has been approved by the Retail Credit Association in your particular city.

*N. G.
Accounts*

In the case of overdue accounts it is best to have form letters which are sent according to the character of the account. But if after six months you have been unable to collect an account, turn it over to your attorney. In order that "the accounts re-

ceivable ledger" may be kept in balance, take a monthly trial balance.

It is easy for the person making out the bills to produce accurate statements by referring to the charge slips along with the unitemized monthly amount owed, with the date of purchase, entered on the charge catalog cards. Some shops have alphabetical files in which they keep clipped together the monthly itemized charge slips of customers. This makes verification easy in case of any customer dissensions later. Neat, accurate, type-written statements are essential. Nothing annoys a customer more than an inaccurate bill. So start with your clerk, requesting from him clear, accurate charge slips. Have the person who cares for the charges daily take the slips from the cash register where the clerk has placed them, daily enter them on the charge catalog cards, then file alphabetically in your charge file. If, down the line of operation, each person is accurate, bills will be consistently correct.

*Monthly
Customer
Statements*

Insist upon care and precision in making out the Special Order cards. Train clerks to use *United States Catalogs* quickly and accurately when looking up a desired book. Have them write customer's name and address clearly and title and price of book with publisher and author's name as quoted in the catalog on the order card furnished for the purpose. Have them secure a deposit from the customer unless the transaction is a charge, and caution them to explain that occasionally slight changes occur from the quoted catalog price. This saves long explanations later.

*The Special
Order Cards*

One person is usually in charge of the Special Order list. Taking all the cards which have been dropped during the day in the Special Order box, each evening have the clerk group them together under the respective publishers and fill out the list blanks accordingly. These list blanks, of course, are

*Making out
Special
Order
List*

70 BOOK SHOPS: HOW TO RUN THEM

only possible where one is near the publishers or jobbers. In other cases, if special orders are rush, a bookseller may have to telegraph for books. If not, he orders through the mail. Telegrams should be curtailed, for, naturally, they eat up profits.

The following list blank gives the idea:

<i>Knopf</i>	Order No. 444 L
THE GOLDEN SWAN BOOK SHOP	
18 EAST 40 N. Y. C.	
Please deliver to bearer the following:	
2 <i>My Mortal Enemy</i> —Cather 2.50 Ed.	
1 <i>Green Mansions</i> —Hudson Borzoi Ed. 1.25	
BOOKS OF ALL PUBLISHERS	By <i>Henry Smith</i>

On these lists always furnish full information to the publisher or jobber of what is desired. He is no mind reader and cannot know what editions your shop wants or the number of copies unless it is stated accurately for him.

In the morning you will send a boy for the various books if you are near the source of supply. When he returns, if jobber or publisher was unable to fill any particular order, have the person in charge of the Special Orders take out the order card, make a note of the reason, and then file the card alphabetically along with the other filed order cards. Also notify the customer by form postcard at once of the delay. If the order was filled, either have the books sent out at once if the customer wished them sent, noting on the card the date of sending, or hold until called for by

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customer. In case a customer has ordered two books and one was unavailable at the time, usually send out the secured book at once and the other when it arrives. The order card will show you what sales transaction is to be employed.

IX

A CHAPTER FOR YOUR CLERKS

*Requisites
for
Employment*

WHEN you have walked into a book shop and applied for a position as clerk the owner usually has had two very distinct thoughts in the back of his head as he sat looking at you. First, "What kind of *salesman* will this applicant make?" Second, "What kind of *all-round storekeeper*?" And, of course the sum of the two, "What kind of *bookman in general*?" For, strange as it may seem, the book business is one endless chain of sales made by hands that have first mothered the stock. The two are interdependent and cannot be separated. While selling you are gaining invaluable information about your stock. And while handling the stock you are acquiring innumerable points for selling.

*False
Ideas
About
Employment*

Many new clerks feel they are impressing their employers and earning their salaries merely because they are handing in large sales tallies. Large sales tallies are desirable—no one, least of all the employer, wants a business suddenly to shut down—but they are not enough. They must be backed by general store interest and general ability to conduct all branches of the store's operation.

*Some of
the
Branches
of
Operation*

By branches of store operation we mean—can you, if called upon to do so, open promptly the store's front door at eight of a rainy morning? Then can you quickly gird yourself for a dusting bout and keep at it for two full hours? Can you emerge from

that cheerful and strong to go about learning stock, waiting on hard-hearted customers, and smiling in the face of a fifty-cent sale? Can you punch cash registers accurately and never give a two-dollar bill in place of a one? Can you police the stock and keep a necessary representative title always on hand? Can you in a pinch make out correct shop reports and perform other clerical phenomena? Can you carry the memory of ten thousand titles in your head and tell the publishers of each without the slightest aid from the *United States Catalogs*? If you can—then you'll be a Bookman, my son—and a clerk desired by every book-shop owner in this country and abroad. But knowing that at first this is not quite possible, and to help you when the way seems somewhat difficult, we have interviewed many veteran managers and clerks and made the following digest of their opinions:

One of the first demands of you as a Bookman is—*learn your stock*. No one can begin to sell books until he has some idea of what books his store has to sell. And no one can find out what his store has to sell until he has made an intensive study of the stock. One of the simplest methods of studying the stock is first separating it into its proper classifications. Learn at once the location of these CLASSIFICATIONS. If necessary, write the headings of your store's classifications on a slip of paper and then, referring to this slip, see how soon you can place their location in your shop. When you feel your sense of direction is good, then go about studying more closely these classifications. Associate in your mind books on allied subjects. Watch for discrepancies in classification. By this we mean, often, for some special reason, exact classifications in arrangement are violated. This requires fixing mentally the out-of-place book in its exotic location. See what departments are stressed in your shop, and what are less emphasized. Be able as soon as

*Learning
Your
Classifica-
tions*

possible to lay your hands on various calls for books. Know what books are on display in the windows. Do not place yourself in a position to be dazed by customers' requests. If you know your classifications, you will not. Many a sale is lost through that dazed look in the clerk's eye. Lack of confidence sets in almost simultaneously in the customer's mind.

*Becoming
a Stock
Student*

Make up your mind, from the beginning, to be a *stock student*. Determine to know what you are doing. So many newcomers in the book trade have based their entrance into it mainly on their "just always having loved books." They wander around like ghosts for a few weeks and then waft off into thin air. But not until they have eaten up booksellers' profits, small at best; caused innumerable store enemies, and wasted their own time to boot. To be of any value, *from the start* you must concentrate on stock learning. Handle the books; read "blurbs"; familiarize yourself in a cursory way with books' contents; read book reviews in Sunday newspapers and current magazines; take home books and, through the first chapters, get "the flavor" of the book (but always arrange with your employer before taking out books); refer constantly to the *Publishers' Weekly* and *The Retail Bookseller*, and any other Trade Bulletins which are kept at your employer's desk; look at catalogs of various other publishers; get Asa Don Dickinson's *Thousand Best Books* and Becker's *Reader's Guide*; make the acquaintance of the *Bookman's Manual* and the *Bookman's Glossary*; leave no stone unturned to know *what has been, what is, and what will be* in the book business. This means becoming a *stock student*.

*The
Enemy of
the Stock
Student*

By now some of our newest aspirants to clerkhood, may be wondering just when they are going to sleep, if the above list is to be conquered. Let us state right here that no employer wishes to claim any of your legitimate sleeping hours provided you keep awake

during the time which is rightfully his. Eight hours of alert interest in the entire operation of your shop will give you time to learn your stock thoroughly. The trouble is that too many clerks are alert less than half of the allotted working time, and the rest of the time are overcome by ennui or by unlimited conversational orgies with companion clerks. There is no deadlier enemy to stock learning than the constant barage fire of personal conversation indulged in by clerks. And where does it get them? If the same deluge of *book* conversation took place, we should have clerk miracles in shops and customer complaints would be unknown.

There is another menace—the constant dropping into shops of clerks' personal friends. The familiar sight of a customer timidly attempting to attract the attention of a Damon clerk obviously engaged in conversation with some outside Pythias friend is one with which we are all familiar—and one which costs the shop concerned no end of lost sales and bad customer impressions. Meet your friends for lunch (you may get a free meal out of it), and unless they are on book business encourage them to call around about six—at home. Also, those telephone calls from friends! We believe from the deluge of personal calls that some clerks receive they are missing their calling. They should be telephone operators.

*Friendly
Calls*

We urge that clerks begin immediately to work toward a book Utopia by exchanging ideas on books instead of clothes and other extraneous topics. No clerk can read all books in stock, but each clerk can read some of the books. By pooling résumés of these books and presenting salable ideas, clerks are widening their book knowledge immeasurably, as well as increasing book sales.

*Help from
Book
Conversa-
tion Among
Clerks*

Anything a clerk can do to help himself sell books should be done. He must look at the shelves and figure constantly how he is to eliminate the stock on

*The Aim
of Every
Clerk*

hand. Not *wholesale* elimination, failing to consider the hands into which the stock will fall. But careful discrimination, placing suitable choices in satisfied customers' possessions. This is the trick of selling, and through this trick constant new customers for your shop will be made and constant increase in profits result. Added to this there will be an increase in your own value and in your pay check at the end of some week. For remember, only as you enlarge your shop's business has your shop the increased capital to expand your salary. This is apparent to everyone.

*Bookselling
Psychology*

But now, how to place suitable choices in satisfied customers' possessions? Right here the psychology of bookselling enters into the question. You must attempt to know your customer. The real bookseller studies each customer as a doctor studies a patient. He listens carefully to his requests. He determines what this man would *really* enjoy and not what he *ought* to enjoy. Remember, as clerk, one is no educator. Your own tastes, unless solicited, should be held in check until after office hours. Of course, honest opinions if requested are best, but wholesale donations of clerks' thoughts are distasteful. Finding out what a person has been reading, gives some key to what he likes to read. Following this up with compatible suggestions, usually produces satisfactory results. Figuratively, try to climb inside the purchaser's mind and look out through his eyes. Think in his terms. Make suggestions that will meet his tastes. For, after all, *salesmanship is nothing more nor less than selling something that satisfies.*

*Requirements of
Selling*

To sell something that satisfies requires infinite pains and patience. It means taking as much interest in a fifty cent sale as in a fifty dollar sale. It means combing your store for the right suggestion. It means putting over a good suggestion in the terms of a sold article.

When you see the back of an unsold customer, and therefore an unsatisfied customer, going out of your shop, think of him as potential financial material, wandering about in the world loosely, outside your selling grasp. Competition in this day and age is too great to risk losing one ounce of buying material. Therefore, exert yourself to the limit to corner within your four walls that book-buying material, and exhaust every means to find the suitable or desired choice. Of course, never appear to be forcing a sale. Instead create the impression that the customer's *desire* is your one concern.

*Failure to
Meet
Require-
ments*

If, however, after a thorough search, the book desired is not in stock, take an order for it. Every well-run shop prides itself on its Special Order Department; therefore, always take advantage of this department. The routine of the Special Order is as follows: Look up, in the *United States Catalogs*, verifying in the Trade List, while the customer is still in the shop, the full title, author, and publisher of the book desired. Explain to the customer that since the date of the catalog's publication the quoted price of the book may have changed slightly. Write plainly on the card furnished for Special Orders the customer's name and address. Indicate whether it is charge or cash. If cash, indicate whether the full or partial amount was paid—in cash transactions a deposit should usually be required. Note whether the book is to be called for or mailed. If mailed, collect postage amount, unless the address is within your regular delivery territory. The amount of postage will depend on the zone to which the merchandise is to be sent. If by any chance a clerk should forget to secure the postage amount, by all means send the book anyway and charge the error to petty cash. Write clearly the title of the book, avoiding abbreviations, the full name of the author and the publisher. Drop this card into the Special Order box and, if

*Remedy—
the Special
Order*

it is a cash payment, ring up the amount on the register.

*Unknown
Requests*

Right here a word might be said about unknown requests. If a customer asks you for a book of which you have never heard but says, "Oh! Never mind! I'll get it another day," and leaves the shop, do not rest on your oars and wait for that other day. Clinch the matter then and there. Look up the request at once in the *United States Catalogs* toward the day when the customer does come back, or toward the day when someone else asks for the same book. Information gained is never lost. It is one more feather in your cap of knowledge.

*Importance
of Special
Order
Transac-
tion*

Back to the Special Order: The importance of accurate execution of the Special Order cannot be overstressed for a mistake causes endless embarrassment to your shop. An order is a trust from a customer. It is also a much desired book, or it would not have been ordered. Therefore, it is up to your shop to get that book into the customer's hands as quickly as possible. But *never* promise a book for a certain date unless you can deliver it. If, by accident a promise goes wrong, then get that book at retail through another book shop. *One has to make good on Special Orders at no matter what pains or cost.*

*Proper
Conduct for
Selling*

There are a few things to be remembered in the conduct of selling. Among them, quickness, quietness, alertness, tactfulness, and courteousness. Then an impersonal attitude is also essential. No matter to what heights one may have climbed outside the business, once one has contracted to be a salesman one's own glories must be submerged. The public is often inconsiderate and rude, but a little tact or stoical courteousness on the clerk's part goes a long way to dispel a customer's unfriendliness and discourteousness. If, however, you find you are unable to please a person, turn him over to some other clerk or to the

manager, who may at once hit on the right suggestion. Impudence on a clerk's part, or even righteous anger, is utterly futile and must be avoided in any civilized book shop. Besides, the pleasant customers more than overbalance the unpleasant ones, and many book friendships result. Remembering a customer's name and what you have sold him last, determining how he liked the choice and talking about new publications for which you have him in mind, cannot fail to please a customer and incidentally make you his only book adviser.

Selling must be the invention of constant new schemes worked out by alert clerks. When a customer's request for a book is filled the next step is to add an extra sale to his account. Avoid the casual prompt "Shall I wrap it," and instead supplement his choice with a suggestion of your own. Then two books instead of one will frequently leave the shop. This business of merely wrapping up requests is a losing one and should be avoided religiously. Of course, if a customer is hurried or one of those "choose your own book" types, nothing is gained by pestering him. But if he has any gleam of interest in his eye you should endeavor to make that added sale.

*Helps for
Increasing
Sales*

With your established customers it is well to have a notebook in which you have jotted down their tastes and made record of their wants. Telephoning or dropping them a card concerning books in which they would be interested is well worth while, and forecasting the future publications is also a good method.

*Notebook
Practice*

Follow newspaper reviews carefully: If some title of which your employer has bought heavily is badly "panned," try to sell it to someone who would enjoy it before it becomes definitely stamped as no good. Otherwise, it may never sell!

*Making
Inexpensive
Suggestions*

There are certain books which one should keep in mind for that "added sale" problem, inexpensive yet worth-while volumes. The Star Dollar Books of the Garden City Publishing Company, the Modern Library, the Borzoi Classes of Knopf, along with the Grosset and Dunlap and Burt reprints, which fall into this class, furnish real treats for your customer.

If you yourself have been enthusiastic about a book and *believe that your customer would like it*, you have no right to let that book stand on your book shop shelves. It is your duty to introduce it glowingly to your patron and wait for him to glow back at you when he has read it. Storing up and not releasing book shop treats in the back of your own brain is a selfish habit and when practised widely eventually results in some of the "bigger and better" financial failures among firms.

*Stifling
Turnover*

If you have made a practice of storing up unreleased book shop treats, you have been guilty of one of the greatest sins of the book business—stifling turnover. Turnover means moving your stock as quickly as possible. Each day and really each hour that a book stands on your shelves is so much added loss to that book. In the first place, physically, through dust and handling, a book deteriorates, and in the second place it represents money tied up, money which, if realized, could be turned to further investment. A stationary book is therefore a constantly increasing loss and should be regarded as every bookseller's responsibility. The older the book the greater the responsibility toward that book. Until it is carried off by the proper customer it should be held uppermost in the clerk's thoughts. So get warmed up about your books and transmit that warmth to your customer. Do this and you cannot fail to sell a book. If you have no warmth in you, you ought to be selling Frigidaires.

SUGGESTED MECHANICAL PROCEDURE OF SALES FOR A CLERK

If the sale is charge, write the name and address of the customer distinctly on the charge book and the name and price of the book accurately. Place the original in the cash register drawer. Wrap the duplicate in the customer's package.

*Charge
Sales
Transaction*

If the purchase is to be charged to one person and sent to another, be sure you get the customer's signature in the place for the signature and an O. K. from the manager of your shop. If it is to be charged and taken, get the customer's signature and an O. K. from your manager.

If it is a cash sale, name the amount given before making change. This prevents confusions in the customer's mind and fixes the denomination of the bill in your own mind. Ring up the sale at once and do not leave money lying about. In making a sales transaction, if you yourself are working the cash register be sure you are ringing the correct amount, pushing your own letter, and cash key, if it is a cash sale and that you are making the correct change. Watch and avoid giving two-dollar bills in place of one-dollar bills. Beware of the short-change artist who gives you a twenty-dollar bill, accepts part of the change from you, then demands his twenty dollars back, saying that he has the exact change to give you instead. Remember you have already given him so much change on the twenty dollars—maybe all—so he has not only his twenty dollars but your change in exchange for his small final "exact change" amount. When handling money you must banish every other thought from your mind but the money transaction. Do not allow yourself to be distracted by waiting customers demanding your services. Finish one sale

*Cash
Sales
Transaction*

*Short-
change
Artist*

before you begin another. This is the way to do accurate business.

*Short or
Over rings*

Register all sales *accurately*. Never resort to "short rings" or "over rings." When an error has been made in ringing up a sale, report it at once to your store manager. Always record the error on a slip of paper; then have it O. K.'d by the person in charge and place it in the cash drawer. Never put yourself in a position to be under suspicion. Safeguarding yourself with a clear, written, notation will avoid this.

Shoplifters

Right here a word about shoplifters: When a person returns again and again and never buys anything, watch him. When he gets in a corner with his back to you for a long time, watch him. When he wears a bulgy overcoat or carries a suitcase or bulky newspaper, watch him. Then, if your suspicion seems well grounded, report the fact immediately to your employer and let him decide the procedure. If you are alone in the shop, make it evident you suspect the person but don't risk a broken head to save one book.

*Package
Wrapping
and
Delivery
Service*

Package wrapping is important. No one likes to carry away a parcel resembling a tied-up elephant. The very nature of books should make them a neat bundle. If a customer asks for a special wrapping, either in the case of a gift or for mailing, comply cheerfully. True, it is no special treat for you, but when it is well done it makes a tremendous "hit" with the customer. Then delivery service is another matter to be observed carefully. Make no false promises to customers. If, however, through an unavoidable mistake you have made some impossible delivery promise, leave no stone unturned to rectify that mistake. Tell your employer what you have done and see how he can help you out. Be willing to deliver the book yourself, or pay for a special messenger from the petty cash fund rather than break a

promise to a customer. *Doing what you say you will do is the most important thing in business.*

SUGGESTED GENERAL METHOD OF HOUSEKEEPING FOR CLERKS

Given a section of a shop as your own to look after, determine to make it the cleanest, the best arranged, and the most attractive section of its kind in your city.

*Aim of
Good
House-
keeping*

If you are in a small shop, and housekeeper-in-chief of every section, determine to make your small shop the cleanest, the most accessible, and the most attractive shop in your neighborhood. The very nature of books demands orderliness and cleanliness to sell them.

Every morning, when you reach your shop, first go through a general tidying-up process. Put back on the shelves the books that belong on them. Make any changes in the prices of books that may have occurred. Be careful to cut out the old prices from the jackets. Keep all reserve stock drawers closed. Watch out for radiators. Heat ruins books. Dust carefully the ledges and books on display, for dust is one of the greatest enemies of the stock. Arrange books on tables with thought of color in mind and display qualities. Visit the table set aside for new incoming books and at once attempt to learn the title, author and publisher of each.

*Daily
Method of
Attacking
Cleaning*

Go through your stock for "shorts"—that is, check up on the representative books which always should be in your section. No matter whether or not you like or dislike the book personally, if it is "short," "short" it. Your employer can then decide whether it is needed. Your business is simply to "short" and "short" always. Look carefully behind on the shelves

*Daily
"Short"
Slips*

to be sure whether or not the reserve stock has the book which is missing in front. Bring from behind the books which fill up sold gaps. This, of course, *should have* been done by the person who sold the book, but if he failed, you must do his job. Then visit your stockroom frequently to see what you have on hand. Make out daily "short" slips. These are the slips on which you note the staples in books that your section lacks. There are certain standard books in your section that you must have. For instance, Funk and Wagnall's Dictionary is as necessary in most shops as sugar in a grocery store. Through publishers' catalogs you may check thoroughly missing stock, and through the buyer's card record. It is your business as clerk to keep up the stock. Whether a book is in your section or not, if you sell it and it is the last copy of that book, or nearly the last copy of some popular book, invariably and immediately, "short" it, in a notebook kept in your shop for that purpose. Carelessness in this matter results in big financial losses for your employer.

*Daily
"Want"
Slips*

Report to your employer, through "want" slips, customer requests which your store lacks and perhaps should have. You can make yourself valuable only as you interest yourself in your shops's needs. *This is exactly as important as making sales.*

*Daily
Thorough
Cleaning*

After you have straightened up your stock generally and made out your "short" and "want" slips, have one part of your section each day which you will clean thoroughly. The advantage of this is that then you never have to go through one day of terrifically strenuous housecleaning, and your stock is in good order all the time. For example—you are cleaning your travel section. Take the books off the shelves, banging gently two together. Lay them in piles on ledges, not disarranging the alphabetical order. Wipe the shelves with a slightly damp cloth, then replace books, watching carefully the

alphabetical order and making note of the books that need new jackets. (These may usually be obtained from the publishers.) By this method, once a week, your entire stock should have had a complete overhauling. Incidentally you will have familiarized yourself with the stock in the finest way possible.

After you have finished your general and detailed housecleaning you yourself will need soap and water. You may even need a smoke. But, if you do, refrain from this "rebuilder" inside or at the door of the shop. Instead, get permission to go off the premises for a minute where you can enjoy solitary peace and not offend some straight-laced customer. When that is over you can spend your spare time walking about the shop, looking at new books, familiarizing yourself with the window display, acquainting yourself with older books, thinking about sales which ought to be made, and keeping your eyes open for your chance of selling in general.

X

THE BUYING AND SELL- ING OF CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Location and Its Effect

FIRST, of course, your location will influence greatly the size of your children's department. If you are in a residential section or in a department store you will do a bigger juvenile business than if you are in a financial district or an arcade location. But the real size can be determined once your new business is under way and tests have been made.

Juvenile Conscience

In no other department should greater conscientiousness be exerted by the bookseller than in this one. When you are buying for adults you may have a certain educational and moral twist to your conscience, but in most instances it is feeble. If a full-grown man wants a badly written, blood-and-thunder story, that is his own look-out. Or if a blonde approaching middle age slinks in to mumble a request for the newest, highly heated love drama, that, too, is none of your concern. But, on the other hand, if a nice rosy-cheeked little boy darts in and asks for the best story of adventure you have to offer, you want to know the best story and have it to give him. If you do not, and through carelessness, hand out some cheap, poorly executed piece of work, unless you are the kind of person who would take candy from a baby, you cannot be very easy or untroubled in your mind.

The same uneasiness would possess you if a big strong father hurried in to get the best book in print on woodcraft or electricity and you not only had no books on either of these subjects but could suggest none to order.

Bear in mind, most parents and relatives are putty in the bookseller's moulding hands. If you will make a study of children's books and get yourself well-grounded in the best classics and modern books, you can build up a business that by no means need be sneezed at. Some very conscientious parents are timid concerning the choosing of their offspring's reading and would as soon take out a set of tonsils as buy books independently. The minute they sense you know your business, the minute they feel you are in touch with the best in modern education for their children, they will cling to you with a tenacity that sometimes may be almost embarrassing.

But you must warrant this confidence before you accept it, and you cannot warrant it without hard work and earnest study of the best in juvenile literature. You can find out the best by procuring such reading lists as the American Library Association furnishes; by studying the suggestions in the pamphlet published by R. R. Bowker Co., *The Bookshelf for Boys and Girls* and the pamphlet published by The Baker & Taylor Co., *The Gateway to Bookland*; by reading Anne Carroll Moore's delightful books, *Roads to Childhood* and *New Roads to Childhood*; by careful perusal of such book reviews as the *Atlantic Monthly Bookshelf* or the various New York newspapers furnish, and by knowing the reading curriculum of such schools as the Horace Mann, The Ethical Culture School in New York and the progressive schools in your own city. These sources are reliable and indicative of the best in child literary experimentation.

Naturally, unless you have a very large shop, you

*Adult
Dependence
in
Juvenile
Matters*

*Dependable
Guides to
Child
Literature*

*The
Prescribing
Juvenile
Specialist*

will not be able to carry all these various recommendations, but knowing what to have even if you cannot produce it at once, is the main necessity. A parent would far rather wait for an ordered book of which she was sure, than secure immediately one of whose worth she was uncertain. So make yourself the child's reading specialist, diagnosing its literary case with the greatest care. Then the parent will wait, gladly for the prescription to be filled.

*Suitable
as Well as
Worth
While
Reading*

Right here a word should be said about forcing too dry reading on a child. There are so many good enthralling tales which will not choke the little reader that it is unforgivable to hand him something unpalatable. Often too advanced reading will kill forever a real love of literature in the child. What greater sacrilege could be committed than smothering a taste for reading in a small, unformed soul!

*Literature
Arranged
According
to Age*

So this brings us to the important point of buying and selling correctly for all ages. Have classified signs in your shop, indicating proper age divisions. These, of course, cannot be infallible, for ages differ widely in their tastes. Yet these signs locate a bewildered customer in his era if, at the moment, you or your clerks are unable to wait upon him.

*Six
Months
to Two
Years*

For from six months to two years, you ought to have unfadable linen books which sore gums and tiny teeth can chew upon at will.

*From Two
to Four
Years*

For from two to four years, flat linenette books are advisable, books which can be opened up and stood on the floor. The creeping child adores these.

*From Four
to Six*

For from four to six, the simple picture story with strong color is in demand: *Mother Goose*, *The Three Bears*—all the old favourites.

*From Six
to Sixteen*

For from six to sixteen, a wide selection is possible. All the classics in various editions—the best editions printed well with harmonious illustrations. (Often the most expensive edition is by no means the best.) Through libraries and *The Bookshelf for Boys and*

Girls, with the other sources already mentioned, you will find out the favored editions. Constantly be on the lookout for good text. Sometimes eyes are permanently ruined because of bad printing.

For the child from ten to sixteen, outside of the classics, you will have to furnish exciting baseball, crew, and Indian stories, to say nothing of mystery, school, and college tales. There are dependable series of these which always delight the child. In this field you must do some real research work in order not to go wrong. Reading the publishers' advance copies of new juvenile literature is very necessary.

If you are in a residential section no doubt you will have a good steady trade. There ought to be the added chance of a child's lending library. If you are in a business district you will need the best of the new books. The average man dashes in, does not know what the child has read, yet wants something immediately. You will sell this customer a bright jacket with new, worth-while, entertaining material inside. In the case of the sophisticated book shop, it is well to meet this trade with not only the reliable standards but attractive French picture books; bright Czechoslovakian books—such foreign publications as B. Westermann, New York, carries. Department stores must have a lot of everything. Innumerable people want to fill in sets; they want their particular editions; they want stacks of books for all ages. Here you must carry a big stock, even to the better class reprints.

One kind of book that seems to go well in every location is the Little book—such as *Little Black Sambo*, *Peter Rabbit* (English edition), and other "two by four" juveniles. There is something in the child's nature which makes it dote on teensy, weensy books.

As to the physical arrangement of your children's department: It is well to have one small nook

*Ten to
Sixteen*

*Analyzing
Sectional
Needs*

*Individual
Book Shop
Needs*

*The Little
Book*

*Physical
Arrangement of
Shop*

wherein you place small tables and chairs with low, intimate shelves for the child's use. The suggestion is that you do not line these with too expensive editions—small hands, allowed to roam at will here, may ruin some prized stock. But outside this nook, you can arrange your more expensive stock for parents and other adults to examine carefully. Having a boys' section composed of adventure, baseball, and college stories along with handicraft books and other distinctly boyish books is a good idea; then, separating these according to age is another. The same in the girls' branch. Place your series, mystery, and school stories here, in their proper ages, along with sewing, cooking, and other "How to Do Something" books. The classics need not be divided except into years, nor do histories and Bible stories need to be separated. Your linen books and simple stories may be together, along with drama and poetry.

*An Expert
for this
Department*

If you are too busy to give much time to this department we would suggest that you choose an attractive young woman with some knowledge of children's education as the head of that department. If she has any kind of initiative she can do a big thing for you, for your store, and for herself.

XI

ACCOUNTS AND RECORDS

MUCH of the material in this chapter was originally published under the title, *Book Shop Accounts and Records*, in a booklet by Cedric R. Crowell issued in 1926 by the National Association of Book Publishers. Their permission to use the material is acknowledged gratefully.

To operate any business successfully, there are certain records and accounts which must be kept so that the proprietor or his manager can at any time make a survey of the business and proceed with his plan on the basis of facts plus imagination, instead of imagination only. The general retail book business is no exception, and a retail book shop will become increasingly profitable as proper records are made and studied, pertaining to sales, investment, inventory, cost of operation, and revenue.

The usual principles of good bookkeeping apply, of course, to a book shop. If he is not already familiar with these principles, it will be wise for anyone contemplating entering the business of bookselling or hoping for advancement in it, to familiarize himself with them. They can be found in any good elementary book on bookkeeping. Supplementing these, however, are some general observations and specific suggestions which may prove of additional value.

Probably the first record to which most booksellers refer is the sales record. This is quite natural and proper, for the retailer is not concerned with production problems, large shipping problems, etc.; his sole

*Necessity
of Proper
Records
and
Accounts*

*Comparative
Daily
Sales
Report*

92 BOOK SHOPS: HOW TO RUN THEM

function is to sell at retail what he buys at wholesale, and the best index of the success of his effort is recorded in his cash register. The total daily store sales and cumulative sales should be recorded for permanent record by months, and the corresponding months in each year should be compared. The following table illustrates an effective method of keeping this comparative record which, to be of any real value, must always be kept up to date.

TABLE No. I
COMPARATIVE DAILY SALES RECORD
October Sales

Date		1924	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929
1	day total	110.05	120.17				
2	day total	92.10 202.15	105.04 225.21				
3	day total	105.26 307.41	111.61 336.82				
4	day total	125.05 432.46	Sunday				
5	day total	Sunday	194.00 530.82				
6	day total	200.10 632.56	140.16 670.98				
7	day total	118.69 751.25	150.15 821.13				
8	<i>And so on throughout each month</i>						

Careful
Analysis
of Figures

By a careful study of these figures and a frequent check-up to find average daily sales in any given period from a week to a year, the trend of the busi-

ness can be easily determined and an extra effort should be exerted in the low sales periods to increase the otherwise normal business. The bookseller should, of course, always strive for, and can usually attain, an appreciable increase each month over the corresponding month of the previous year. No definite percentage of increase can be suggested here, because a great many conditions enter into the matter; but the goal should be high, and every effort should be made to attain it.

In addition to the cumulative record showing the whole store sales trend it is desirable to keep a similar record for all permanent selling personnel so that the bookseller knows who are his most productive employees, whether his personnel is steadily improving in sales ability, and whether he is overpaying some and underpaying others. (If the store is departmentalized, similar departmental records will be important, but most book shops are not sufficiently large to warrant this last record.)

Now, besides the total daily store sales and cumulative sales you will want to devise a classified daily report sheet. We feel there ought to be spaces for the following entries on this sheet:

(1) *Register Reading*. Enter in this space, the reading at the close of the day; from this subtract the reading at the close of the previous day. The difference should be the amount of your cash deposit in the bank on the day after the date for which the report is made. The total bank deposit should always agree with the total cash figure which you will show under Transaction Totals. On this sheet will be a space for Total Sales and Total Cash. Under Total Sales you will *not* include library sales, but under Total Cash you will. On the morning of the first business day of each month, you should turn your register reading back to zero.

*Personnel
Sales
Records*

*Classified
Daily
Report*
(See insert
facing
p. 96.)

(2) *Transaction Totals*. Enter by classifications in their proper spaces, the total amounts of your day's transactions. These total amounts are ascertained by separating the classifications of the register tickets or tape into their proper groups and adding the totals. When these figures are entered make sure that Received on Account, Library Rentals, Library Sales, Library Deposits, and Cash Sales equal the total cash figure; that the Cash and Charge Sales equal the Total Sales figure.

(3) In the space marked Brought Forward enter the totals, month to date from your previous day's report. These figures added to your current day's business will give a total of your business month to date, which totals should be entered in the spaces provided.

(4) After Individual Sales Record enter the names of your clerks, showing the total amount of each individual's sales.

(5) *Accounts Receivable* shows the condition of your accounts receivable. Indicate in this entry the old balance and add each day the total amount of charges for that day; then deduct received on account and credits for the day under consideration.

(6) Under *Rental Library Record* include a cumulative record of Library deposits and the total amount of the deposit money due members, as well as library revenue for rentals and sales from the library. A cumulative record of library stock is kept under this heading. Each day add to the previous day's totals totals of stock transferred to the library on that day at both cost and selling price, and deduct withdrawals as against selling price and cost price.

(7) Under *Petty Cash Record* itemize any expenditures made on that day from your petty cash fund. In case of discrepancies indicate and itemize them. If you are short you should show this fact; if

over you should also show it. Treat magazine sales as book sales unless you decide that segregation will be helpful.

(8) Under *Remarks* show the total of the corresponding day's business of the previous year, i.e., total sales and total library revenue.

INVESTMENT IN STOCK

The record of investment in stock is very necessary, if not quite as important as the sales record upon which it is based. The initial investment in stock for a new book shop should be determined on the basis of a *conservative* estimate of annual sales. The following table gives suggested initial stock for book shops of varying sizes:

TABLE No. II				
SUGGESTED INITIAL STOCK FOR NEW BOOK SHOPS				
Conservative Estimate of Annual Sales	Average Daily Sales	Cost Price of Sales	Initial Stock	Rate of Turnover† if Average Stock Is Same as Initial Stock
\$10,000	\$ 33	\$ 6,600*	\$2,000	3.3
15,000	50	10,000*	2,750	3.6
20,000	66	13,000†	3,300	3.9
25,000	82	16,250†	4,000	4.06
50,000	164	32,500†	7,500	4.33

*Discount figured at 33½ per cent.

†Discount figured at 35 per cent.

‡See definition on page 96.

The manager of the new book shop should estimate his sales, for basis of investment, *very* conservatively. He can always buy additional stock to meet an in-

crease in sales over his estimate, but if sales do not materialize on the basis of his estimate he will find himself handicapped at the outset with excessive stock investment which will depreciate very rapidly, with the resulting shrinkage of assets. The above table represents the maximum initial stock which should be purchased; any amount which can be carried below these figures and still give satisfaction to customers will be still better.

STOCK TURNOVER

Care in controlling the initial investment will be futile in the subsequent operation of the shop unless the bookseller adopts and adheres to a comprehensive plan of inventory control. Every successful merchant must secure a reasonable rate of stock turnover.

Turnover is the relation between average inventory at cost price and annual sales, figured at cost price—cost price must always be compared with cost price.

Table No. III illustrates the practical operation of the theory of stock turnover.

The above annual turnover—3.5006—is a fair rate of turnover, and one which should be reached by every general book shop. A turnover of four or five times a year is frequently obtained in book shops, but usually on annual sales of more than \$25,000.

The question naturally arises as to how this relationship of sales to stock investment can be maintained. Failure to understand properly the theory and practice of stock control will usually result in bankruptcy proceedings, with attendant loss to bookshop proprietor and creditors.

A more rapid rate of turnover can be secured on sales indicated in the table by reducing stock on hand, or by increasing sales and keeping stock in-

TABLE NO. III

Month	Stock on First Day of Month	Monthly Retail Sales
January	\$3,500	\$2,000
February	4,000	1,600
March	4,200	1,700
April	4,000	1,900
May	3,900	1,900
June	4,200	2,000
July	3,700	1,600
August	3,700	1,400
September	4,500	1,500
October	6,000	2,000
November	6,500	1,800
December	7,500	5,600
Total	\$55,700	Total Sales \$25,000
	Less 35%	8,750
		\$16,250—Cost of Sales 65%
12 Months	\$55,700	
	\$4,642—Average Stock	
	$\$4,642/\$16,250=3.5006$ Annual Turnover	

vestment at the same amount as is indicated in the table. It is never wise to wait until the year has elapsed before computing the turnover. An indication of the probable turnover can be computed at any time as is illustrated in Table No. IV.

Stock must be thought of as something mobile, *not* static. It must almost come in one door of your shop and go out the other, without stopping, in order to make money for you. It must be considered the passing guest, not the permanent poor relation. And because this "passing" is of such paramount impor-

*Rate of
Turnover*

TABLE No. IV.		
COMPUTATION OF APPROXIMATE RATE OF YEARLY TURN-OVER BASED ON FIVE MONTHS SALES		
Month	Stock on First Day of Month	Monthly Retail Sales
January	\$3,500	\$2,000
February	4,000	1,600
March	4,200	1,700
April	4,000	1,900
May	3,900	1,900
Total	\$19,600	Total Sales \$9,100
		Less 35% 3,185
		\$5,915—Cost of Sales 65%
5 months/\$19,600		
\$3,920—Average Stock		
\$3,920/\$5,915=1.509		Five months turnover
<i>If turnover for five months is 1.509, annual turnover at present rate will be:</i>		
$5/1.509=.302 \times 12=3.624.$		

tance, you must have an *actual* means of computing the speed at which it is passing. This means your rate of turnover figure as stated above. This rate of turnover figure is secured by computing the ratio between your average inventory at *cost price* and your annual sales, *also at cost price*. For example, your average stock for twelve months (see Table III) is \$4,642 at cost price; the cost of the books you have sold is \$16,250; your annual turnover will be the ratio between the two—or \$4,642/16,250 or 3.5006. If you like to buy books you have to have the money with which to buy them. You cannot have the money if your sales from the stock in which you have already invested, have failed to bring it in. So make

*Fair
Rate of
Turnover*

the sales, which make the holes in your stock (and make the money), to replace those vacant spaces with the new books you do want. As a final word: Remember, you have a dollar—you invest it in a book—you sell the book for \$1.50. The next dollar and a half book you buy, you only have to spend 50 cents of your own money, for you have in your cash register 50 cents of the other fellow's money.

PURCHASE BUDGET

Table No. V represents the inventory control or purchase budget of a bookseller who has been carrying excessive stock in comparison to the volume of his business. He has had too much money tied up in stock and has accordingly found it frequently necessary to borrow from bank or individuals to meet his current operating expenses. Thus he has had heavy interest charges and the burden of notes payable to bother him, with the result that his best effort has not been given to his immediate task—bookselling.

Estimate of sales will naturally be computed by use of comparative monthly sales records of previous years illustrated in Table No. I; by the trend of sales in the two or three months immediately preceding, and by general business conditions. (If the shop is new and has no such record, the bookseller must be even more cautious in setting a conservative sales estimate.) After taking into consideration the above factors, he estimates his sales by months for the first six months of a given period, and for convenience we shall use the same basic sales figures as in Table No. III.

Of course it is impossible to adhere to any arbitrary monthly expenditure for stock without materially injuring the shop's sales, but if the bookseller is going to control his stock investment, the *figure for the six-months period must be strictly followed* with

TABLE No. V
PURCHASE BUDGET

Month	Ultra-Conservative Sales Estimate
January	\$2,000
February	1,600
March	1,700
April	1,900
May	1,900
June	2,000
Total Estimated Sales	\$11,100
Cost of sales i.e., retail price less average discount (35%)	\$7,215
Physical inventory, January 1st	\$6,500
This is too high for estimated <i>annual</i> sales of \$25,000 for if average stock is \$6,500, turnover will be:	
65% of \$25,000—\$16,250	
6,500/16,250=2.5 Turnover	
Accordingly the bookseller sets an in- ventory reduction goal for himself.	
Desired inventory July 1st to secure improvement in rate of turnover ...	<u>5,000</u>
Necessary reduction of inventory is	\$1,500
Bookseller's estimate of sales for six months period is \$11,100 at selling price or \$7,215 at cost price.	
<i>Available funds for purchase, if same inventory on July 1st as on January 1st would be satisfactory</i>	\$7,215
<i>But there is a necessary inventory re- duction of</i>	<u>1,500</u>
Therefore available funds for purchase in the six months period under dis- cussion are	\$5,715
This available sum should be arbitrarily spread over the six months period something like this:	
January	\$1,200
February	800
March	1,000
April	700
May	900
June	1,115
\$5,715	

the following exceptions: on the first of every month the purchase budget should be revised on the basis of actual net sales and actual purchases for the preceding month. The revision can be best explained by Table No. VI.

TABLE No. VI

MONTHLY CORRECTION OF PURCHASE BUDGET

Available for six months purchase on first of January	\$5,715
January sales were \$300 in excess of the conservative estimate, therefore available funds may be increased* by 65% of \$300, i.e., cost of sales.	195
Revised total, with correction based on <i>actual</i> sales in January	\$5,910
Actual purchases in January on basis of <i>orders placed</i> and <i>not</i> on basis of bills received	1,600
Balance available for remaining five months ..	\$4,310
Arbitrary Distribution:	
February	\$700
March	895
April	700
May	900
June	1,115
	\$4,310

*Available funds will be *decreased* by 65% of the amount, if actual sales are less than estimated sales.

A similar revision should be made each month so that the budget is always up to date and yielding either funds for purchases if business is on the up grade and in excess of estimated sales, or warning the bookseller that his enthusiasm for the purchase of books is outstripping his ability to sell them. If the purchase budget is carefully followed the bookseller

will have a constant control of his stock investment. Of course the amounts will vary with the volume of sales, but the procedure will remain the same regardless of the volume.

INVENTORY

Dates of Inventory

In a successfully run book shop, a physical inventory of all stock on hand should be taken twice a year. A suggested plan is as follows: On January 1st take an inventory at both cost and selling price. On July 1st at selling price only. Library stock should be taken on a separate set of sheets, at cost prices only, in both January and July. It is well to begin three or four days before the 1st of January or the 1st of July, as the case may be. On the 31st of December or the 30th of June, before midnight, all recording should be completed.

Tabulation Inclusions

In a careful inventory the following information should be included (see page 103):

- A. Classification of books, i.e., fiction, biography, etc.
- B. Year of acquisition.
- C. Selling price.
- D. Cost price (in January).

Take the inventory on the sheet similar to Number VII. Number the sheets to avoid losing any without knowing it.

Inventory Procedure

Attach to each "shelf section," in your shop and to each table a slip of paper 3" x 2"; number each slip, in sequence, to designate the location in your shop and indicate on the slip the kind of books to be listed, in respective sections and tables, as:

Proper Numbering and Classification

- Section 1—Fiction.
- Section 2—Nature.
- Section 3—Biography.

N. B. Do not list dissimilar classifications in the same sections; for instance Bible and Biography

TABLE No. VII
WORK SHEET

Section No. Inventory—Midnight, Dec. 31, 19...

Classification
(Use separate sheet for each classification)

BE ACCURATE

S.P.=Selling Price C.P.=Cost Price

Regular Discount						Short Discount, i.e., less than 30%					
Acquired This Year		Last Year		Previous Years		This Year		Last Year		Previous Years	
S.P.	C.P.	S.P.	C.P.	S.P.	C.P.	S.P.	C.P.	S.P.	C.P.	S.P.	C.P.
10.00	6.60	4.00	2.67	5.00	3.15	10.00	7.50				
5.00	3.40										
2.00	1.33										
3.00	1.95										
7.50	5.00										

must not appear on the same sheet. Use separate sheets for each classification.

Designate teams of two to work together, one person writing on the work sheets (each of which should be labelled by sections to correspond with the shelf slips); the other to read off—the classification, year of acquisition, selling price, and cost price (if it is a January inventory). It will be well to insert on the work sheets, in the space provided for that purpose, after the year of acquisition, the code letter of your shop for the respective years. (Obviously the person reading must know the code.) Use one side of sheet only. Make each team responsible for the sections which it lists. Have it initial each work sheet and each shelf slip in the lower right-hand corner. Then, a manager should constantly oversee the stock-taking to be sure it is progressing correctly.

It is not necessary to list books according to author or title, but merely the classification and the year of acquisition; series of books, *where prices are the*

*Dividing
Work
Among
Teams*

*Pooling
Sets and
Series*

same, may be pooled together instead of listing each one separately. For example, Modern Library, reprints, Scribner illustrated juveniles, may be handled in this way. But care should be taken to be certain that the copy used for this purpose represents the average price instead of the unusual price, and that the years of acquisition are correctly indicated.

*Short
Discounts*

In short discount books, i.e. books carrying discount less than 30 per cent. list separately and carry through by sections as per work sheets.

*Selling from
Shelves
Where
Inventory
Has Been
Taken*

In case any sales are made from stock already listed during the process of inventory, i. e. before midnight of December 31st or June 30th the total of such sales should be noted and deducted from the sheet covering the section from which the sales were made prior to transfer of figures to summary sheets.

*Include
All Stock*

Be sure to include all stock in reserve, i. e. in the *stock room, under tables, in cabinets, behind books on shelves, in windows, on special order shelf*, and in any other place where you may keep reserve or display stock. In case of shops carrying book-ends, greeting cards, or stationary items of any sort, all such items should be included on separate sheets, properly labelled. *Be positive all magazines are listed on separate sheets, properly labelled*, and included on summary sheets, but here, too, make all possible returns before the date of inventory.

*On Sale
Stock*

All *on sale* stock should be listed as a separate section and properly labelled on work sheets. It should then be summarized on the summary sheets. Your monthly *on sale* report (see page 127) should be attached to the inventory. *Clear up all possible exchange, on sale, damaged, or shipped in error stock before inventory*. Otherwise, add this group to the inventory.

*Special
Orders Not
Filled*

Include on final recapitulation sheet, deposits taken on special orders not yet filled, where bills for such

books will be dated after the zero hour for inventory taking.

Take inventory for the library on separate sheets designated for that purpose. Indicate Month of Acquisition and Cost Price. In addition to the stock on the shelves, be sure to include an accurate record of all books in circulation. Then, on the inventory sheets, indicate whether books are In Stock or In Circulation. List used library books, which have been withdrawn for circulation and are now for sale, at the price they will bring at retail and take 50 per cent. of that price for securing the cost price. Be sure to note all transfers from shop to library for June or December, as the case may be.

The following data as per items on the final recapitulation sheets also should be included:

1. Add the items on all bills dated prior to the date of inventory for books not yet received. Also, add the items on all bills dated prior to inventory but not yet passed for some reason or other.

2. Add books received prior to the date of inventory for which bills have not been received. *It's your stock whether it has been billed or not.*

3. Add books sold prior to date of inventory when invoices have been dated subsequent to that date.

After the actual recording of the year of acquisition, selling price, and cost price of stock (if it is January), the sheets should be gathered and carefully checked by number, to be sure that none are missing. Remember this must be done by midnight of December 31st or June 30th, as the case may be, if you are to have a correct inventory. Then, the figures for each section and each table should be totalled on the work sheets. These figures should thereupon be transferred to the summary sheets and properly extended, the totals being carried forward from one page to another. Be sure that all work

*Circulating
Library
Procedure*

*Proper
Tie-off
Record*

*Computa-
tion of
Inventory*

It is this sheet and the summary sheets which will give you the most accurate picture of your inventory. From its study, you will know the amount of stock on hand at retail and cost price; you can determine the average discount of your stock on hand; you can find out the proportionate amount of your total investment which is represented in the various classifications; you can tell how much of your stock is current and how much of it has remained on your shelves unsold for a year or more; you can compare it with the inventory of the previous year and discover whether your record of year-old stock is better this year than it was last year, etc.

TABLE No. VIII
INVENTORY SUMMARY SHEET

[illegible]

TABLE No. IX
INVENTORY FINAL RECAPITULATION SHEET
(Make out after Summary Sheets)

DATE January, 19...

	This Year		Last Year		Previous Years		Total	
	S.P.	C.P.	S.P.	C.P.	S.P.	C.P.	S.P.	C.P.
Regular discount	\$5,000	\$3,250	\$2,000	\$1,300	\$1,000	\$600	\$8,000	\$5,150
Short discount								
TOTAL	5,000	3,250	2,000	1,300	1,000	600	8,000	5,150
TOTAL STOCK								
This year							5,000	3,250
Last year							2,000	1,300
Previous years							1,000	600
Total stock before corrections							8,000	5,150
CORRECTIONS:								
Add bills dated prior to Jan. 1st for books in transit							25	16
Add books received prior to Jan. 1st for which bills have not been received							15	9
Add due shop on exchange accounts with firms or individuals							150	100
Add correction (stock left out of work sheets in error)							250	160
Other corrections								
Total to be added to Total Stock							440	285
Revised Total before Subtractions							8,440	5,435
CORRECTIONS:								
Subtract: We owe firms and individuals on exchange accounts							25	16
Subtract stock included in work sheets in error							45	30
Subtract: We hold deposits on customers' special orders for books not yet received or billed							75	47
Subtract bills dated after Dec. 31st for stock already received and included in inventory								
Other corrections								
Total to be subtracted from Revised Total							145	93
FINAL TOTAL							8,295	5,342
TOTAL PHYSICAL INVENTORY							8,295	5,342
LEDGER INVENTORY							8,000	5,160
DIFFERENCE: Shortage								
Overage							295	182

LEDGER INVENTORY

*Ledger
Inventory*

When sales are made from the books on hand the average cost price* of such sales is deducted from the record of stock on hand, and as books are placed in stock their cost price is added to the record of stock on hand. This record is what is known as a ledger inventory and should be computed at least once a month. (It should not be confused with the figures in the purchase budget which are based on the record of orders placed and estimated sales. A bookseller will frequently charge books to his purchase budget months before they are received. Some of them may eventually be removed from the publishers' lists, or in case of business reverses the bookseller may cancel such orders before they are shipped.) The ledger inventory is computed from actual sales and actual bills payable for books received, as indicated in Table No. X.

It will be noted that an arbitrary cost of sales figure of 65 per cent. has been used in Table No. X. This figure is based on the experience in average general book shops where large discounts on quantity orders and prevailing general discounts to the trade by the general publishers net this average figure in spite of the fact that some books carry a discount of $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent., others 30 per cent., and in cases of textbooks sometimes as low as 15 per cent. If any bookseller over a period of months finds by careful analysis that his cost of sales is in excess of 65 per cent., or less than 65 per cent., he should use his own percentage figures in his monthly computation of ledger stock on hand.

*This will be 65 per cent. if average discount is 35 per cent., i.e. 100 per cent. retail price, less 35 per cent. discount=65 per cent. cost of sales; or 66 if average discount is 34 per cent., or 67 if average discount is 33 per cent.

TABLE No. X

LEDGER INVENTORY

Physical inventory January 1st	\$5,000
Additions to stock in month of January at cost price	500
February 1st inventory if no sales had been made	\$5,500
January sales \$1,600 at selling price; or, if the average discount was 35%, at cost price, 65% of \$1,600	1,040
Ledger inventory February 1st	\$4,460
On March 1st the ledger inventory record should read as follows:	
Ledger inventory February 1st	\$4,460
Additions to stock in month of February at cost price	700
March 1st inventory if no sales had been made	\$5,160
February sales \$1,400 at selling price, or, if the average discount was 35%—cost price	910
Ledger inventory—March 1st	\$4,250

This should be repeated each month, and physical inventory, whenever taken (preferably on January 1st and July 1st), should be compared with ledger inventory figures. There will usually be a difference. If the ledger inventory has been properly kept and the physical inventory properly taken, an excess of the physical inventory over the ledger inventory will indicate that the cost of sales percentage has been too high, i.e., that the average discount has really been better than computed. A physical inventory less than the ledger inventory indicates one or more of the following:

1. Cost of sales percentage has been too low, i.e., average discount has really been less than computed.
2. Sales have not been properly recorded.

*Comparing
Physical
Inventory
with
Ledger*

3. Discounts, if any to customers, have not been properly recorded.

4. Mark downs have not been properly taken.

5. Books have been stolen.

An analysis, even though it is a long process, to discover the exact cause is important. Average cost of sales can be verified or corrected by use of inventory sheets, or by taking all of the invoices for the period and totalling the selling price and the cost price and seeing what percentage the latter bears to the former. Most invoices are marked on receipt to indicate selling price. In cases where this is not done by the publisher the bookseller should so mark them. An analysis of the other possible causes is not so simple, and the bookseller may find no check-up possible on the past six months, but he should keep a watchful eye on all possible leakages in the future. If the discrepancy between physical and ledger inventory is excessive, another inventory should be taken on the first of the following month.

It may also prove important occasionally to take an inventory on the basis of publishers to discover which publisher, if any, is receiving most adequate representation, and also which publisher's books are securing the slowest rate of turnover.

MARK DOWN

*Mark
Down*

No matter how carefully the buying has been done, it is inevitable that some books will stay on the bookseller's shelves for a year. All such titles should receive careful study in an attempt to analyze their failure to sell, and the bookseller should be able to draw certain deductions for use in future buying and selling. Such books, however, must be in the great minority if a reasonable rate of turnover is to be obtained. Prompt clearance of such books at whatever they will bring is preferable to

their retention in stock where they are a constant discouragement to bookseller and customer alike.

If the bookseller has been cautious in his accounting methods he has set up a reserve for losses fund by taking a small percentage of his sales—1 per cent. or 2 per cent., to cover the losses incidental to bad purchases, uncollectable accounts, and other miscellaneous losses. It is to this reserve for losses fund that mark down on all stock should be charged and Table No. XI is a suggested method for such mark down procedure.

TABLE No. XI
MARK-DOWN RECORD

Date.....

Quantity	Publisher	Author	Title	Mark*	Old cost price per volume	Total old cost price	Sale price per volume	Total sale price	65 % total sale price	Loss at cost price. †

*Mark-code of purchase date.

†To obtain loss at cost, subtract 65% of total sale price from total old cost price.

The old price in the book should be crossed out but not erased, and the new price carefully indicated for the bookseller's information and the customer's.

Of course the *actual* monetary loss is the difference between clearance sale price and original cost; but on the other hand these mark-down books

*Actual
Monetary
Loss on
Mark
Down*

should bear their share of overhead expense, and, consequently, good bookkeeping dictates that the loss is the difference between the arbitrary cost of sales of the clearance price—that is, 65 per cent. of the clearance price if average discount is 35 per cent.—and the original cost price. This loss should be charged to the reserve for losses fund. If a still further mark-down proves necessary to effect final clearance, the procedure is to subtract 65 per cent. of the new clearance price from 65 per cent. of the previous clearance price. This is a further loss to be charged to the reserve for losses account.

COST OF DOING BUSINESS

*Cost of
Doing
Business
Defined*

“The cost of doing business” in a retail book shop is the term applied to all items of expense incidental to the operation of such a shop exclusive only of the cost of merchandise. The bookseller can classify his cost of doing business under the following headings:

- Rent
- Salaries
- Shipping
- Advertising
- Equipment depreciation
- Reserve for losses
- General or miscellaneous expenses

All cost of doing business and any net profit must come out of the difference between the selling price and the cost price of the books sold. In general book shops the prevailing percentage difference between selling price and cost price is 35 per cent., providing the bookseller uses enough books carrying a discount in excess of 35 per cent. to offset those which carry a discount less than 35 per cent. To secure a profit of 5 per cent. on retail sales with average discount of 35 per cent. necessitates keeping the

cost of doing business at 30 per cent. The following items will vary somewhat under different circumstances, but as listed they may prove a helpful guide:

Rent	8%
Salaries	10%
Advertising	2%
*Shipping	2%
Equipment depreciation	1%
Reserve for losses	2%
General expense	5%
Total	30%

*This figure will be considerably higher west of Chicago.

These percentages are based on *annual* sales, and some of the items will run in excess of the indicated percentages in some months (see Table No. XII); but they cannot total *annually* in excess of 30 per cent. if the average cost of sales is 65 per cent., i.e., 35 per cent discount on net retail price, and the desired profit is 5 per cent.

Careful study of this table should prove particularly helpful to the individual who is contemplating operating a bookstore and has perhaps consulted real estate agents for space. Rents for good retail locations in all cities with which the writer is familiar are very high at present, with no indication of recession. If a store is available at \$4,000, the bookseller should do a gross annual business of at least \$50,000, or an average of \$164 per day, which represents approximately 80 items of sale *every day* for a year. A \$3,000 a year location must produce at least \$37,500 in annual sales, or it is too expensive. Sometimes it is possible to make a sliding rental agreement which provides for an increased rent every year, but with the first year less than the initial asking price. In this way the problem of

Rent

financing is somewhat easier, as the rent problem grows with the probable growth of the business. Sometimes a bookseller will fail to charge himself rent because he owns the building in which he operates the store. This practice is thoroughly unsound and should be avoided. The market rental value of such space should always be included as a rental charge in the computation of cost of doing business.

Salaries

Salary expense quite properly carries the highest percentage of cost. A book shop caters to the intellectual needs of the community and needs the service of an intelligent personnel. Unfortunately neither gross sales nor gross margin of profit is sufficient to produce compensation commensurate with the compensation in many other fields where the requirements are less exacting. Until these conditions are remedied by a larger book-buying public, or a more uniformly liberal discount, or both, book-shop personnel cannot be paid as liberally as book-shop proprietors would wish. Under present conditions, total annual salaries cannot exceed 10 per cent. unless the manager is willing to take less than a 5 per cent. profit or scale down his other costs of doing business so that he can add 1 per cent. or 2 per cent. to his salary quota. Of course, a proprietor should charge his salary to the business if he is giving his time to it.

Advertising

No book shop can expect to open its doors and by virtue of that fact find trade flocking to its shelves. A book having a sale in America of 100,000 copies is a comparative rarity. Yet America has a population well in excess of 100,000,000 people. In other words, best sellers are purchased by about one person out of a thousand, and the sale of the average book is probably to not more than four persons out of 100,000. This is both an encouraging and discouraging sign. Encouraging—because it indicates the potential possibilities in the retail book business,

and discouraging—because it indicates the inertia to book buying among the American people notwithstanding the millions and millions of dollars already spent in book advertising. The impression that a local bookseller can make on these potential opportunities by advertising is, of course, very limited, since he has available only 2 per cent. of his annual sales for this purpose.

Initial promotion work for a new shop will normally exceed the 2 per cent. figure, but a special appropriation should be made for this initial work.

In a store doing \$25,000 per year, the available annual funds will be only about \$500. Quite naturally there is a difference of opinion as to the percentage of sales that should be devoted to advertising. Here again the bookseller may devote more than 2 per cent. to advertising if he can scale down his other operating costs, but if his average margin of profit on selling price is 35 per cent. and he gets a 5 per cent. net profit, he must keep these total operating costs down to 30 per cent. This figure is as unchanging as logic. The bookseller's store window is probably his greatest potential advertising medium, and he should utilize it to the utmost to create sales. In some of the large general department stores window space is figured as an advertising expense, but it is doubtful whether the average bookseller should so consider it. The National Association of Book Publishers has a booklet covering the whole subject of bookstore advertising and publicity, containing many valuable suggested methods.

Shipping will, of course, vary in different localities, depending on the distance from the market. Shipping expense should include all transportation costs on purchases from any source and a careful study should periodically be made to discover if the most economical shipping routes and methods are being used. This is particularly true of shops in the

Shipping

Middle West, where shipping expense will invariably run to 4 per cent. or 5 per cent., and in the Far West even higher. In such cases the bookseller will have to save on some of his other operating expenses if he is to keep his annual cost of doing business within the 30 per cent. figure. In many other lines of business the shipping expense is included in the cost of the merchandise to be sold. This is quite proper in lines where the dealer makes his own retail price; but in the case of general book shops, the retail price is almost invariably made by the publisher and the book is advertised at that price. Accordingly the bookseller does not set his own retail price on the basis of his actual cost of doing business plus his cost of merchandise, plus his net profit. He must, as it were, necessarily work backward and compute his cost of doing business on the basis of publisher's advertised selling price.

One of the many advantages of membership in the American Booksellers' Association is the use of the Association's Clearing House facilities, which will make possible a substantial reduction in shipping expense.

Equipment

When a store owner offers his property for lease it is offered almost invariably as is, i.e., no provision is made for shelving, floor covering, lighting fixtures, etc. As a result the bookseller, like other merchants, must provide adequate fixtures for carrying and displaying his merchandise. He must also purchase certain store supplies for permanent use, such as cash register, etc. All of these items whose life will run over the period of the lease, should be considered equipment and should be included in the equipment account. The total of all this equipment, we shall say by way of illustration, will cost between \$1,500 and \$2,000 for a small book shop. This is perhaps a slightly inadequate figure, but annual sales of \$30,000 to \$40,000 should not carry much more than

this. Many book shops have actually invested only a few hundred dollars in equipment and have accomplished wonders with ingenuity, good taste, hammer, nails, shelving, and paint. While theoretically equipment is an asset and figures as such on a financial statement, equipment will bring next to nothing at resale after installation. Obviously equipment costs represent a comparatively large initial investment, next to stock the largest single initial cost. This equipment naturally depreciates in value, and its depreciation is a legitimate cost of doing business. It should be noted here that failure to charge operating costs to any business, results in a false profit statement. If the profit is in excess of what it should be on the basis of actual operating costs, the proprietor of the business will pay a larger government income tax than is necessary. Equipment should be depreciated over the term of the lease. If the equipment cost is \$3,000 and the lease is for ten years, the annual depreciation should be \$300, or \$25 per month.

As new and necessary items of equipment are added from time to time, these should be placed in the equipment account and the depreciation on these items computed over the balance of the lease. If any equipment is sold, the equipment account should be credited with the sale and the monthly equipment charge will be proportionately reduced. Care should be taken not to charge to equipment, supplies and items for only temporary current usage; all such items should be included under general expense.

Reserve for losses account has already been referred to in the paragraph devoted to mark downs. This fund is gradually accumulated by setting aside 2 per cent. of retail sales for such losses as inevitably develop in any retail business, such as: necessary mark downs, uncollectable charge accounts, theft, etc. Such items are some of the hazards of the business of bookselling, and they should be underwritten

*Reserve
for
Losses*

from all sales by a regular percentage withdrawal as suggested, instead of being underwritten only by the sales of the particular month in which the actual losses occur. Any loss should be charged to the reserve for losses fund, and the account will be decreased by the amount of such deduction. It is well to let the fund accumulate on this same basis, even though annual deductions do not equal annual additions, for it is always available for the unforeseen contingency. If after several years it assumes a disproportionate relationship to stock investment and accounts receivable, some part of it can quite properly be absorbed in the profits of the business.

*General
Expense*

General expense is the catch-all account in the above classification of cost of doing business. Some authorities consider it too inclusive and recommend that such items as heat and light, delivery, supplies, telephone, towel supply, insurance, taxes, repairs and interest on capital invested, be segregated. The writer agrees that such items must of course be carried as separate ledger accounts, and must be segregated for detailed analysis on a general expense itemized statement (Table No. XIII). But in the writer's opinion a better perspective of the business can be obtained if the operation analysis sheets (Table No. XII) are not cluttered with information in too great detail. All the items properly fall in this general expense account which are *not* rent, salaries, advertising, shipping, equipment depreciation, and reserve for losses.

OPERATION ANALYSIS

*Operation
Analysis
Defined*

The operation analysis sheet is made up from the respective ledger accounts and includes all ledger entries under the various headings for the respective months. Any good book on double-entry bookkeep-

ing gives detailed information for the keeping of ledgers and the journal, the book of initial entry.

The operation analysis sheet on page 121 reveals on examination several important points. It is first of all obvious that the first three months of operation have resulted in a loss of \$89.90, or 1.3 per cent. of sales. This should not be a discouraging sign, for a comparative study of the respective months indicates that the third month alone showed a 2 per cent profit which was more than offset by losses in January and February. It is apparent that losses in February were heavier than in January; that February sales were smaller than in either of the other months, and that February total cost of doing business in money and percentage was more than in January or March. A detailed study of February cost of doing business indicates that: (a) salaries were \$31.50 less than in the other months (February is a short month); (b) advertising was \$87.94 heavier than in January, when no advertising expense was incurred, and \$49.44 heavier than in March (the results of the February advertising were not immediately apparent in increased sales, as frequently happens; but March showed a substantial gain in sales over January and February); (c) shipping in February was \$24 less than in January, and \$30 less than in March; (d) equipment depreciation was the same in all three months; (e) reserve for losses varies but slightly in amount and remains constant in percentage of sales; (f) February general expense is higher in money and percentage than either January or March; and (g) the total cost of doing business is higher in money and percentage than either of the other months. This combined with small sales naturally makes February business comparatively unsatisfactory. Steps should be taken by the bookseller at once to change the results in March. The figures for March indicate that quite properly

he made an effort in the direction of increased sales, rather than curtailed expenses, for his sales are materially better, his total cost of doing business is only \$6.11 less than in February, and his earnings are \$50.85 compared with February losses of \$134.99—a difference of \$185.84.

It should be borne in mind constantly that percentage figures are quite as important as figures representing dollars and cents. Every operating expense is large or small only in relation to the volume of sales. One bookseller, for instance, might be spending \$25,000 per year for salaries and yet have a lower salary percentage than a bookseller spending \$2,000 annually for salaries. A comparison of figures between the two for mutual help could be based only on the percentage relation the various items bear to sales.

The itemized general expense sheet referred to in an earlier paragraph may be kept in the form of Table No. XIII.

*Trial
Balance*

In addition to the operation analysis sheets there should of course be the usual monthly trial balances, for details of which reference is again suggested to a good elementary book on double entry bookkeeping. These trial balances should list all assets, liabilities, and capital, and indicate current net worth.

The writer recommends a budget system for future operation. This should be prepared on sheets exactly like those in Table No. XII, and should be prepared for several months at a time on the basis of estimated sales and expenses. For instance, on January 1st the bookseller estimates for the next six months his monthly sales and sets them down in black and white; he next estimates his cost of doing business on the basis of fixed charges such as rent, reserve for losses, known salary expenses, etc., and estimates his probable other expenses. After setting all this down in his budget of operation, and figuring percentages,

TABLE No. XII
OPERATION ANALYSIS SHEET* For Year 19....

Description		January		February		March	
		Per cent†		Per cent		Per cent	
Book sales	month cumulative		2,250 00		2,000 00 4,250 00		2,478 13 6,728 13
Magazine sales	month cumulative		50 00		40 00 90 00		45 25 135 25
Miscellaneous sales	month cumulative		34 82		22 76 57 58		31 29 88 87
TOTAL SALES	month cumulative		2,334 82		2,062 76 4,397 58		2,554 67 6,952 25
COST OF SALES	month cumulative	65.7	1,533 80	65.4 65.5	1,348 36 2,882 16	65.0 65.3	1,660 54 4,542 70
Rent	month cumulative	8.5	200 00	9.7 9.1	200 00 400 00	7.8 8.7	200 00 600 00
Salaries	month cumulative	15.0	350 00	15.4 15.2	318 50 668 50	13.7 14.5	350 00 1,010 50
Advertising	month cumulative			2.0 1.7	87 94 87 94	1.6 1.8	38 50 126 44
Shipping	month cumulative	2.0	45 00	1.0 1.5	21 00 66 00	2.0 1.7	51 00 117 00
Equipment Depreciation	month cumulative	1.1	25 00	1.2 1.1	25 00 50 00	1.0 1.1	25 00 75 00
Reserve for losses	month cumulative	2.0	46 69	2.0 2.0	41 24 87 93	2.0 2.0	51 08 139 01
General expense	month cumulative	6.0	140 09	7.5 6.7	155 71 295 80	5.0 6.1	127 70 423 50
TOTAL COST OF DOING BUSINESS	month cumulative	34.5	806 78	41.2 37.6	849 39 1,656 17	33.0 36.0	843 28 2,499 45
TOTAL ALL EXPENSE‡	month cumulative	100.2	2,340 58	106.6 103.2	2,197 75 4,538 33	98.0 101.3	2,503 82 7,042 15
EARNINGS§ OR LOSS	month cumulative	.2	(5 76)	6.6 3.2	(134 99) (140 75)	2.0 1.3	50 85 (89 90)

*This form should cover entire year.

†All percentages are per cent. of sales, i.e., item divided by total sales. Cost of sales represents average cost of merchandise sold, and under no circumstances the amount of merchandise added to stock in a given month.

‡Includes cost of sales, and total cost of doing business.

§Subtract total all expense from total sales, or if total all expense exceeds total sales, subtract latter from former for loss represented by figures in parenthesis.

TABLE No. XIII
ITEMIZED GENERAL EXPENSE*

		January	February	March
Accounting	month	10.00	8.00	12.25
	cumulative		18.00	30.25
Bond	month	.40	.40	.40
	cumulative		.80	1.20
Care of store	month	15.00	10.00	17.00
	cumulative		25.00	42.00
Carfare	month	2.00	2.00	2.25
	cumulative		4.00	6.25
Check exchange	month		.30	.10
	cumulative		.30	.40
Credit research & collection	month		1.50	
	cumulative		1.50	1.50
Delivery	month	4.25	6.25	10.00
	cumulative		10.50	20.50
Equipment repairs	month	5.75		
	cumulative		5.75	5.75
Insurance	month	5.00	5.00	2.15
	cumulative		10.00	12.15
Interest on capital invested and borrowed	month	45.00	45.00	45.00
	cumulative		90.00	135.00
Lights	month	20.15	18.15	8.25
	cumulative		38.30	46.55
Miscellaneous	month	5.04	10.00	8.00
	cumulative		15.04	23.04
Printing & Stationery	month	8.00	10.00	4.50
	cumulative		18.00	22.50
Shipping material	month	5.00		2.02
	cumulative		5.00	7.02
Stamps	month	2.00	5.00	5.50
	cumulative		7.00	12.50
Supper money	month		3.00	
	cumulative		3.00	3.00
Telegrams	month	2.00	2.50	3.00
	cumulative		4.50	7.50
Telephone	month	3.00	6.00	3.78
	cumulative		9.00	12.78
Travel	month		12.11	
	cumulative		12.11	12.11
Trade helps	month	4.00	7.00	
	cumulative		11.00	11.00
Water & towel supply	month	3.50	3.50	3.50
	cumulative		7.00	10.50
TOTAL	month	140.09	155.71	127.70
	cumulative		295.80	423.50

*This form should cover entire year.

he can compare his totals and his earnings, or losses, on the basis of his estimated business. In this manner he will know where the weak spots are, he can tighten up on expenditures, or, better still, "loosen up" on selling effort. The objection is frequently advanced that a merchant does just as good work without a budget, and that budget making is a waste of time. If a thorough knowledge of his business and its possibilities for success or failure are of no importance to any merchant, including the bookseller, budget making *is* a waste of time. But the alert bookseller, who wants to know what his book shop holds in prospect, and how he can help make the prospect brighter, will spend the necessary time to make operation budgets and guide his imagination by the known and probable facts in the case.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the writer would like to point out that he is aware that the principal function of a book shop is to sell books. The keeping of records recommended herein, and still others not mentioned, are valuable only in that they will enable the bookseller so to manage his shop that he will be the more likely to remain solvent and be able to continue indefinitely, and with increasing profit, one of the most interesting of all vocations—bookselling.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS

The following working methods for carrying out some of the basic principles suggested above in this chapter may prove helpful:

Extreme care should be taken in the matter of orders. Picture to yourself the woe you must cause if your order sheets go in to the publisher or jobber in incorrect form; the letters, telephone calls, and wires

Orders

that must ensue to clear up mistakes. Also, think of the money you are losing if from any cause discounts are incorrect, quantity wrong, or shipping instructions inaccurate.

**Method of
Writing Up**

It is well to use a duplicate order pad, so that you have in writing a replica of your agreement with the publisher or jobber. Also, further to insure accuracy, it is wise to employ the card record of stock of which we spoke in the chapter on buying. Of course, you will indicate on it (a) terms and dating; (b) shipping instructions; (c) list price; (d) discount price; (e) extension and total cost price.

It may prove best to keep new publications and stock orders separate. Be sure to watch your orders to see that you have received what is coming rightfully to you. One manager we know remarked casually the other day that fifteen minutes of close scrutiny of her bills netted her eight dollars. When we think of the many fifteen minutes we have spent anxiously scrutinizing an obstinate customer's face, with "no sale" results, we think we shall begin making our profits from returned bills, instead.

On all purchases from publishers or jobbers made in the regular course of events, the bills are payable according to arrangements which you make with them individually, usually within thirty, sixty, or ninety days. Some publishers allow a cash discount of 2 per cent. if the bill is paid in ten days.

**Order
Terms**

On stock orders placed between the 1st of July and December 1st many publishers and jobbers will grant what is known as "January terms." This means that it will be satisfactory for you to pay the bill on January 1st, at which time you will presumably have ample funds to meet these obligations, because in the meantime you will have sold the books and converted them into cash. On purchases made in the months of July, August, and September many of the publishers allow either the January dating or a 2 per cent. dis-

count if the bill in question is paid within ten days after October 1st, i.e., "2—10 October 1." This is so much additional discount for your shop, and it is important that you always discuss with the salesman the terms that he will give you on the stock order that you place during the period above indicated.

It is important to have both the cash discount and net dating indicated on each order, i.e., what the cash discount will be if and when you are entitled to it, and the final date on which payment can be made. Then, if you are in a position to finance the bills on the discount date and take advantage of the additional discount you can do so; or if money happens to be tight at the moment you can delay payment until January or whatever the net date may be.

As the stock arrives, have it checked against the corresponding invoices and orders. Instruct whoever checks it to see if the quantity received corresponds with the quantity ordered; if the proper discount, indicated on the original order, has been allowed; if the publisher's price extension is correct; if the selling price which should appear to the left of the cost price appears on the bill—if it does not, put it there; and in case of special terms for payment, indicated on original order, such as 2 per cent 10 days, October 1, be sure the bill carries a notation of such special terms of payment. When this is determined have the person checking place his initials after "Rec'd O. K." and "Extension O. K." In case it is not correct, advise the publisher by charging him back to the amount of the error, or advise him if the error is in your favour. This is the only way to be sure you are paying correct bills.

Two files ought to be kept in each shop for bills. In one are the bills for the merchandise not received up to date. In the other, bills for the merchandise which has been received. And in this same

*Checking
Bills
Against
Stock*

*Checking
Invoices
and
Entering
Bills*

file are bills for all other expense items. Besides these files each shop should have a bill register. Have the person in your shop who has been designated for the operation enter once a day in this register all bills for merchandise received on that day. There will be an entry space for the date of bill, name of creditor, and amount of bill. Then there is a space for the register number of each bill. Start the first of every month numbering your initial entry as one (1); second entry as two (2), and so on. This entry number again should appear on the back of the bill itself, in a space provided for it in the distribution stamp. Also, you should place the proper net entry in the place provided for it in the distribution stamp. When you have entered the bills in the register, file them in their proper files; those that have been checked in the checked file and those that have not in the unchecked file.

Marking Stock

For the marking of stock it has been found convenient to use in combination with poker-faced numerals, some very simple code *for indicating the cost price*. Suppose, for example, we take the code "Spade Thick." Each letter in the code stands for a number—S is 1, P is 2, A is 3, D is 4, E is 5, T is 6, H is 7, I is 8, C is 9 and K is 0. Now, in marking stock, you want to show several definite things—first and second, the year and month of purchase; third, the register number; fourth, the retail price, and fifth, the cost price, so that you can always take an accurate inventory. The following example will show how this is done: In the first year of your operation, you want to mark a book. In the upper right-hand corner of the front flyleaf of the book the shop will first place the letter A. Why? Because this is the first year of operating and the year of the shop's age is indicated by regular alphabetical sequence. Second, you will place the number 9. Why? Because the month this book arrives in stock

is September, and certainly September is the ninth month of every year. Following this, in a bracket, is the register number, 402, of the bill for the particular book being marked. Below this is \$4.00, the retail price of the book. Following that is the cost price, in this particular case \$2.48, shown by the letters P D I. Why? Because 2 in the code is P; 4 in the code is D; 8 in the code is I. Then the entire marking looks like this:

402
A 9 ———
\$4.00 P D I

When books are received without invoices, write at once for them. Then make out a memorandum bill yourself, stating the source of supply, title, quantity and discount. Afterward check this memorandum against the invoice which the publisher sends you.

*Books
Without
Invoices*

Although the purchase of books from publishers on consignment is not recommended, certain occasions arise when it is necessary to carry such stock for display or other purposes. If you do, be sure to enter all such orders on your regular duplicate order form when the books are ordered by you, or in case shipment is made without your order, make out a duplicate order; then, if you do not receive an invoice for your on sale merchandise, request one at once from the publisher. It is well to devise some on sale report, in which you show date of bill, register number, publisher, title, price, amount of bill, quantity bought, quantity left. You can, then, over a period of time, see how much you have sold, how much you have to return, and, lastly, how much is owed by you to the publisher.

*On Sale
Report*

Defective books or books damaged in transit should be charged and sent back to the publisher or jobber

*Defective
Books*

immediately. Always state the reason for returning books.

*Weekly
Stock
Report*

It is well to keep a weekly stock report based on bills for merchandise received in stock and sales at cost price. Figures for this report are compiled by adding all bills for merchandise received to be resold, including on sale (on consignment) bills, at cost price, keeping two totals, one showing the book stock and one the magazines purchased. Credits are deducted from total debits. These figures show the total amount of books and magazines purchased. "The increase of stock" figure is arrived at (for book stock) by taking 65 per cent of your gross book sales for the week and subtracting this figure from the net purchase figure. If 65 per cent of sales is larger than net purchases a decrease of stock has been attained, and in this instance the net purchase figure is subtracted from the 65 per cent. figure. If 65 per cent. of sales is smaller than net purchases an increase of stock has been attained. To arrive at magazine "increase or decrease of stock" use 85 per cent of sales. On this sheet it would be well to indicate a cumulative monthly record of these "increases and decreases" and show the net amount of "increase and decrease" of stock for the month. The value of this report lies in the danger signal it may flash if your inventory is mounting too rapidly.

*Magazine
Handling*

Have a notebook in your shop in which you record the list of magazines which your shop sells; the name of the company through whom you obtain them; the date of publication of these magazines; the quantity on order; the cost price and the selling price. When the magazines arrive from the dealer a slip comes with them, which should be checked for verification of quantity and price. Any discrepancies should be corrected immediately. Do not allow dealers' representatives to attempt to run your magazine section. Have one of your personnel make

all return entries and "check in" new magazines. Start your shop off correctly, in this matter. Otherwise the magazine end of your business is usually slipshod.

Shops doing any amount of magazine subscription business will find it advantageous to clear all of their subscriptions through some reputable clearing house. Be painstaking about keeping exact records of all subscriptions taken. Either have a duplicate of initial orders, or your own system of subscription order cards. On this record you will have the name of the magazine; the term of subscription; the name and address of the person who is to receive the magazine; if it is a gift, the name and address of the person sending the gift. Then, whether it is cash or charge. When invoices arrive check them for all details against this record. If it is a charge sale, charge the customer only when you yourself have been billed from the magazine clearing house. Otherwise you will have trouble, as it often takes from three to four weeks to put through a subscription in busy seasons. If customers are billed ahead they become impatient, thinking their subscription has gone astray.

The Petty Cash Report concerns a fund which you have set aside for yourself, to care for such small cash disbursements as: express, parcel post, postage, refunds, et cetera. Also, this fund provides the change for the cash register. This report should be made out at least once a month, and should be made to balance exactly. An unprotected, carelessly handled petty cash fund in the beginning may lead to serious dishonesty later among your personnel. Don't put temptation in anyone's way. Certainly to do so is not fair.

Be sure you are adequately insured for loss by fire or sprinkler damage; public liability; em-

- *Magazine
Subscriptions*

*Petty Cash
Report*

*Shop
Insurance*

ployers' liability; compensation insurance, or plate glass insurance. Caution your clerks to notify you at once of any loss or injury, for sometimes when this is not done within twenty-four hours the insurance may not be claimed.

XII

THE RENTAL LIBRARY

FEW *new* book shop owners realize the importance of the rental library. Besides furnishing a source of steady income, remember always, a rental library brings people into your store. At first they come only to rent, but passing attractive displays on their way to the Rental Department, they eventually begin to buy. And therein lies your opportunity. *Make permanent buyers out of former borrowers.* Let people learn how delightful it is to *own* books, not merely to rent them. Create in them, through subtle sales talks, a desire to become book collectors, not transitory owners. You can do this if you exert real selling technique.

*Advantages
of the
Rental
Library*

You cannot do it if you look bored when a borrower returns a book. You cannot do it if you appear to be uninterested in his next choice of reading. You cannot do it if you make incorrect entries against him on the record cards or fail to have on hand books promised him when he is on the reserve list.

*Wrong
Rental
Library
Attitude*

But taking as much interest in the borrower as in the buyer soon does the trick. You may rest assured that the first time a borrower has to buy a book, for a gift or for any other reason, he will buy it from you. Through your courteous interest and your dependable qualities, shown in your Rental Department, you have made yourself indispensable to him in your selling one.

*Proper
Attitude*

*Location
of Depart-
ment*

It is well to have your Rental Department in the rear of your shop, on a mezzanine floor or in the basement. The reason for this is obvious: You want your borrower to go past attractive displays of "for sale" books before he reaches the renting section. You want subtly suggestive, seasonal tables to remind him of gifts he ought to make. You want "fine" editions, artistically arranged, to call to mind library tables at home. You want new children's books, expressing educational and entertainment values, to pull him up short. In other words, the space between your rental library and your front door ought to be long enough and interesting enough to do harm to the pocketbook of any average passer-by. If it is not, there is something wrong with your shop.

*Choosing
the Books*

Of course, no definite choice of books for the renting department can be laid down, because the character of your patrons plays such an all-important part. However, it has been found a good plan to have, first, the latest and most popular new fiction; second, the popular fiction of the past year, and the earlier books of authors whose present books are causing discussion; and, third, non-fiction having wide popular appeal. However, as one experiments with his library his first choices may vary later; so it is well to go rather slowly at the start. Beginning with fifty volumes, one can gradually increase and diversify one's initial selection until one has a fair-sized representative library.

*Subscriber's
Fee*

As to subscription charges, a method quite generally followed is: One dollar deposit to become a subscriber, with the privilege of reading two books a week which cost no more than two dollars and a half each at retail. On more expensive books a slightly higher deposit and rental are recommended. This deposit is refunded whenever a member chooses to withdraw from a library.

Twenty-five cents a week, paid in advance, for rental charge on fiction, plus either two or three cents a day for overtime, as each individual shop sees fit. Ten per cent. of the cost of the book a week on non-fiction, plus one per cent. of the cost a day for overtime. Local competition would probably affect your decision as to deposits and rentals.

*Rental
Charges*

Now, besides the ruled ledger book mentioned below, it has been found advisable to keep two sets of record cards in separate files. One, the membership card, shows the full name, full address (both business and home), telephone number, date of application, and amount of deposit paid by the new member. Also, on this card are recorded the name and number of the book withdrawn; the date it was removed, and, later, the earnings. The second book, or book card, is kept in the back of its respective book until it is withdrawn, when it is placed in its file. On this card are shown the title of the book, with author's and publisher's name, the cost of the book, and a place for an earning's entry. Also, the number of the book. (This number is taken from the corresponding one in the ledger.)

*Record
Cards*

ACCOUNTING PROCEDURE

It has been found advisable to set up the library as a separate department in order that you may know at all times just what the department is doing. In this way you will ascertain the amount of the investment here and the amount of earnings of the department and of each book. You must remember that when a book is sold in the store, it necessitates only one selling operation. On the other hand, in the rental department your overhead is increased because each rental takes as much time as a sale, and there will be many operations before you can even equal your

*Library
Separate
Department*

selling price. To offset this expense you must obtain total rentals in excess of the retail price of the book.

*Accurate
Accounts*

To get this information, you must keep accurate records. Your general ledger accounts should provide for:

Asset Account—Library Stock
 Liability Accounts
 Library Stock Reserve
 Library Deposits Returnable to Members
 Revenue and Operating Accounts
 Library Rentals
 Library Sales
 Cost of Sales
 Rent
 Salaries
 Advertising
 General Expense

*Asset
Account
Library
Stock*

To this account is charged stock transferred to library and store book stock account is credited. To keep this record, enter all stock going into the library in a ruled ledger showing (1) copy number, (2) author, (3) title, (4) date of entry, (5) cost price, (6) retail price, and later (7) total receipts from rentals, (8) receipts from "weed" sales. Total your acquisitions monthly and make your entries, crediting store stock and charging library stock at cost.

*Library
Stock
Reserve*

While the retail price of a book to be sold in the regular way is known, the total revenue from a book in the library is not definitely known and cannot be known definitely in advance. Furthermore, while the total revenue from a book sold in the regular way is credited in its entirety to sales in the month in which the sale is made, total revenue from a book in the library is accrued over several months, and only such part of that revenue as is taken in during a given month should be credited to the revenue in that

month. For instance, if a book costs \$1.35 and is rented but once at 25 cents per rental in a given month, it might appear that there is a loss of \$1.10; but the real picture of the profit or loss on this book cannot be arrived at until accrued rentals plus "weed" sale are compared with the original cost. Because of these facts, it is necessary to set up an account known as Library Stock Reserve, so that any difference between the arbitrary cost of sales of such library revenue and the actual cost of sales of such revenue can be charged or credited to this account instead of charging or crediting the difference falsely to the operating expense of the library in any one month. A suggested arbitrary percentage figure to use in setting up the Library Stock Reserve is 40 per cent. of total library revenue, i.e., rentals plus "weed" sales.

During the six-months period additions have been made to library stock. These additions at cost price plus the inventory of the library at cost price at the beginning of the six-months period, minus original cost of stock that has been finally disposed of, i.e., rented and then sold, constitute the ledger inventory. This ledger inventory should correspond with the physical inventory of library stock. If the two figures do not correspond, the records of transfers from store stock to library, or rentals, or sales, or withdrawals, have not been properly kept. If the physical inventory is less than the ledger inventory the difference must be charged to cost of sales and credited to library stock. If the physical inventory is more than the ledger, the difference should be credited to cost of sales and charged to library stock. But, in either of the above cases, the library accounting has not been properly handled. (A shortage in shop inventory may be explained by an overage in library inventory).

The exact cost of sales for the library as distin-

guished from the arbitrary cost of sales for any given period of time may be computed as follows:

- (1) Total all library rentals and the "weed" sales indicated on each library book card covering books which have been disposed of actually and finally during the period under consideration.
- (2) Total the cost price of all such books finally disposed of as indicated on each library book card.
- (3) Divide the total cost price by the total revenue, and the quotient is the actual percentage cost of sales for the disposal of books in the period under consideration.

If the actual percentage cost of sales so arrived at for the library is a higher percentage figure than the arbitrary percentage cost of sales, the cost of sales should be charged and library stock reserve credited with the difference in percentage between the actual and arbitrary cost of sales; i.e., multiply the total library revenue from books finally disposed of by the difference in percentage and charge this amount to cost of sales and credit Library Stock Reserve.

On the other hand, if the actual percentage cost of sales so arrived at for the library is a lower percentage figure than the arbitrary percentage cost of sales, the cost of sales should be credited and the Library Stock Reserve charged with the difference in percentage between the actual and arbitrary cost of sales, i.e., multiply total library revenue from books finally disposed of by the difference in percentage and credit this amount to cost of sales and charge Library Stock Reserve.

Library Deposits

Credit the deposit account with deposits received from members and charge the account when refunds are made.

In order to segregate your rental library revenue, designate and have marked two keys on your cash register: (1) Library Rentals; (2) Library Sales. Ring all transactions on proper keys.

Revenue

The cost of sales account has been completely discussed under Library Stock Reserve.

Charge the library a fixed amount for rent each month, based on your total shop's rent. The amount you charge will depend on your library's location in the shop. Also, charge to library the salaries of people engaged entirely in overseeing your library business, and proportion salaries of others working only part time in it. Bookkeeper's and Buyer's time expended in this department should also be estimated. Other added expenses will be: advertising expended on newspapers, jackets, circulars, etc.; shipping based on the number of books taken from the regular stock; miscellaneous expenses, such as taxes, light, heat, etc.

*Expense
Accounts*

Book wrappers should be of some distinctive design, with the name of your shop in clear relief. The more original and more outstanding they can be, the more chance you have of saying to the public, "We have a rental department and we can serve you."

*Book
Wrappers
for Books*

And right here may we beg of you, whatever money you put into advertising, see that it goes into something individual. You yourself know how, without even opening them, you "fire" mediocre looking envelopes into yawning waste baskets! So don't be a blind feeder of waste baskets! Whatever you do, make your advertisements first arresting, next appealing, and lastly financially effective. That is—*Stop* your prospective customers; then make them *Think*; and lastly make them *Buy*.

*Advertising
in General*

PROCEDURE FOR RENTAL LIBRARY

*Securing
Deposit
and
Deposit
Receipt*

First secure the dollar for membership privilege, then give a deposit receipt to your new member and keep the duplicate yourself. From this duplicate fill out the membership card as it should be filled and record the name and number of the book withdrawn: the date of removal and later, the earnings.

*The Book
Card and
Number*

On the second card, the book card, kept in the back of its respective book until removed, are the title, author, and publisher of the book, the cost of it, and a place for the earnings entry. Also, the number. By the number we mean that whenever you add a new title to your library stock you register it in the acquisition ledger. No matter how many books of the same title you put in, each one has its own number. And be sure to place the corresponding number in the back of each new book as well as in the ledger.

*Withdrawal
Process
and
Books Out
File*

Now, when a customer takes out a book, stamp the date of withdrawal in the back of the book. Be sure to see that the name of the library is stamped in the book. Each book *must* have this for identification purposes. Then, on the book card, which was in the back of the outgoing book, enter the borrower's name and again stamp the date of withdrawal. File this card in the Books Out file, chronologically under the date of the month it was removed, and then alphabetically, according to the title of the book.

*Reserve
List
Cards*

In case you are out of a particular title which a customer wants, enter him on the reserve list. Blank cards on which you write the borrower's name and the book desired by him, with the stamped date of his request, are kept conveniently together in the front of the Books Out file. By glancing at this file you have been able to see approximately when the

book would be available. In case of competition from other rental libraries, sometimes one is forced to give twenty-four-hour service on books.

There are two sets of overdue post cards. The first is a gentle reminder that the book is a week overdue. The second, a double government return post card, is a stricter summons, yet couched diplomatically, sent at the end of four weeks' lapse of time from the date of withdrawal. These overdue postcards are prepared from the Books Out file, which, as you know, is arranged chronologically.

*Overdue
Post Card*

The Baker and Taylor Co. and the National Association of Book Publishers have available pamphlets with more details relative to the operation of Rental Libraries.

XIII

TOOLS OF THE TRADE SOME BIBLIOGRAPHY

IF DOCTORS knew as little about their profession as some booksellers know about theirs, the country, east and west, north and south, would be strewn with the experimental bodies of their victims. Murderous cries of help would be piercing the elements and laymen would be attempting to cure themselves by their own hands instead of trusting to untrained professional practitioners. But doctors have more respect for their patrons and more regard for their own status than to start practising without first knowing their game well. They pay homage to their profession by dedicating years of study to it beforehand. They become truly versed in the tools of their trade before they try to build up a practice.

If this is true of one profession, why is it not true of another? Why is it that the average bookseller thinks he can start on *his* professional road without the slightest knowledge of his trade? Why does he think that he can plunge into a business requiring unlimited technique without the faintest notion of that technique? How does he dare callously to take advantage of his public, strutting about his shop, pluming himself with the fruits of his bestseller knowledge, in utter ignorance of the things which would make him invaluable to the intelligent book-reading public? Up to date this question lies unanswered. But gradually, as the general impetus

demands it, book people are going to become more and more accustomed to give skilled book information and less and less prone to hand out ungrounded answers. Then the halcyon days of bookselling will have set in.

Now there are certain reference books which everyone in the book business must be able to use quickly and accurately if they are to be among those present when the halcyon days are actually upon us:

*The Tools
of the
Trade*

The Publishers' Trade List Annual, published by R. R. Bowker Co., 62 West 45th Street, New York City.

*The
Publishers'
Trade List
Annual*

This is an alphabetically arranged price list of all publishers' work. The publishers are arranged alphabetically, as well as their publications, with author and price.

To be able to use this trade list, you must know the publisher. If you do not know the publisher, then use instead the *United States Catalogs*.

An example of using the *Trade List Annual*: Some customer wants to know the author and price of Putnam's *How to Cook for Children*.

You turn at once to Putnam under its alphabetical arrangement. Then to the H's under Putnam. Then to How, and you find *How to Cook for Children*. Reilly, E. M. \$1.75. If there is more than one edition the description of that and price are given.

The United States Catalogs, published by H. W. Wilson Co., 958 University Avenue, New York City.

*The U. S.
Catalogs*

There are the 1912 catalog of all books in print at that time, and its six supplementary volumes. In the fall of 1928 there will be a new catalog, all books in print to January 1, 1928.

These catalogs are essential to every new bookseller. They contain the entries of books under

author, subject, and title, in one alphabet, with particulars of binding, price, and publisher.

For example, a customer asks you for the price of a book called *How to Cook for Children*. She does not know the author or the publisher, but she thinks the book was published recently. You look under the H's in your latest catalog or supplement, and under How find *How to Cook for Children*, Reilly, E. M. \$1.75, '27, Putnam. But suppose, instead of knowing the exact title of the book, she knew only that a man named Reilly had recently written a book on cooking for children—a book she desired. You would look under the R's in your latest catalog or supplement and under Reilly find *How to Cook for Children*, \$1.75, '27, Putnam.

But sometimes we get the customer who knows neither the exact title nor the name of the author nor the publisher of a new book on cooking for children which she desires. Then, the real reference work sets in and one has to find the book under the subject heading. In this instance, look in the C's under "cooking." If not there, try "dietetics" under the D's. Anyway, keep delving away under allied subject heads until you run down your title.

It is well to check titles quoted in the *U. S. Catalogs* with *The Publishers' Trade List Annual*, for very often an old book quoted in one of the earlier catalogs is either out of print or its price has changed since the date of the first publication.

There are many things to be learned about the *U. S. Catalogs*, but by using any analyzation power usually you can find the book you desire: The following questions about solve your problem:

Approximately, when was the book published? Then, "Do I find it under author, title, or subject?" and then, once found—How does it check with *The Publishers' Trade List Annual*?

The Cumulative Book Index is a month-to-month

supplement to the *U. S. Catalog*. It is invaluable for last-minute information concerning books just published.

The Publishers' Weekly, the American Book Trade Journal, published by R. R. Bowker Co., 62 West 45th Street, New York City.

*The
Publishers'
Weekly*

It is essential for booksellers to study this periodical each week, since all problems of the book trade are discussed; future publications announced; the weekly record of new publications given, alphabetically arranged by author; rare book notes written; in fact, everything that a man up in his trade must know. Anyone who has anything to do with book shops should be a student of *The Publishers' Weekly* and *The Retail Bookseller*.

The Retail Bookseller, the monthly house organ of The Baker & Taylor Co., and *The American News Trade Journal*, a Monthly Bulletin of Trade News and Information, 131 Varick Street, New York City, are both quite necessary for the order clerk in any book shop.

*Trade
Bulletins*

A Reader's Guide, by Mary Lamberton Becker, published by Henry Holt.

*Becker's "A
Reader's
Guide"*

A general bibliography for booksellers. It contains answers to such questions as: Is there a novel on musicians; on the stage; on architects; on dogs; on Life in New York? What shall I read for an Around the World Tour? What for a trip to Scandinavia, etc.? What books on children and education? What books on certain religious problems, etc.? These are only a few of the many questions which the author ably answers. A bookseller with any sense of perception can see what a help this would be when startled out of his skin by some customer's unexpected question.

*One
Thousand
Best Books*

One Thousand Best Books and *The Best Books of Our Time*, by Asa Don Dickinson, published by Doubleday, Doran.

Each contains a list of 1,000 books, alphabetically arranged, with descriptive notes. When the bookseller is called upon to turn educator he can embrace these guide books.

*The
Bookman's
Manual*

The Bookman's Manual, by Bessie Graham, published by R. R. Bowker Co.

Contains an exhaustive supply of information about the books with which every bookseller comes in contact in his business. Since the grouping is under special headings such as Drama, French Literature, British Novelists, American Humorists, a bookseller can realize the help this would be in furnishing special bibliographies for various customers.

The Bookman's Glossary, by Holden, published by R. R. Bowker Co.

A compendium of information relating to the production and distribution of books. It contains terms used in the several industries allied with book publishing: paper making, printing, binding, illustrating, and publishing. It contains classical names of towns and cities. Various editions of the Bible. Favored type faces for book work, and proofreaders' marks.

*Children's
Reference
Books*

A Century of Children's Books, by Florence V. Barry, published by Doubleday, Doran.

This gives bibliography for chapbooks and ballads; fairy tales and Eastern stories; the Lilliputian Library; some great writers of little books, besides a vivid picture of the last century's development in the writing and publishing of children's books.

Roads to Childhood and *New Roads to Childhood*, by Anne Carroll Moore, published by Doubleday, Doran.

Books of views on and reviews of children's books. A bookseller will revise his own views on child reading after familiarizing himself with Anne Carroll Moore.

The Bookshelf for Boys and Girls, books from nursery rhyme to grown-up time, published by R. R. Bowker Co., 62 West 45th Street, New York City.

The Gateway to Bookland, an elaborate booklet in color of children's books for all ages, published by The Baker & Taylor Co., 55 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

Above all, do not forget that most helpful book, *Bookstore Advertising and Window Display*, by Hotchkiss, and published by the National Association of Book Publishers, New York City.

Although not strictly books dealing with book-selling, the following have been helpful to the business:

*Helpful
Business
Books*

How to Run a Store, Whitehead; Crowell.

Window and Store Decoration, Fischer; Doubleday, Doran.

Constructive Merchandising, Ramsay; Appleton.

Taking the Guesswork Out of Business, Basset; Forbes Publishing Company.

The Human Side of Retail Selling, Leigh; Appleton.

FURTHER BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR BOOKSELLERS

What Books Can Do For You, Arnold Bennett; Doran.

Quest of the Perfect Book, William Dana Orcutt; Little Brown.

146 BOOK SHOPS: HOW TO RUN THEM

Classification and Definitions of Papers, Lockwood Trade Journal.

French Literature During Last Half Century, Cunliffe, de Bacourt; Macmillan.

Historical Sketch of Book Binding as an Art, Dutton; The Holliston Mills, Norwood, Mass.

The Truth About Publishing, Stanley Unwin, Houghton, Mifflin.

Figures in Modern Literature, J. B. Priestley; Dodd, Mead.

The Men Who Make Our Novels, Charles Baldwin; Dodd, Mead.

Portrait of a Publisher, Grant Overton; Appleton.

Bookselling Helps Through Periodicals

One must keep in touch with current periodicals, if one is to know what is going on in the book world:

The Publishers' Weekly.

The Retail Bookseller.

Newspaper book reviews and newspaper book columnists.

Magazine book reviews.

Advertisements in all publications.

Book Shop Monthly Magazine Book Chats

Many bookstores are now furnishing attractive Monthly Book Chats for their patrons. These range from rather elaborately illustrated booklets of several pages in length to one-sheet broadsides. But each in its way is individual, reflecting the personality of the shop from which it is issued. They are as follows:

Book Bulletin, C. H. Ernst, 263 Main Street, Kenosha, Wis.

The Book Dial, Doubleday, Doran Book Shops, Inc., Garden City, Long Island, N. Y.

The Book News, The Book Shop, Inc., Greensboro, N. C.

- Book Notes*, Meridian Bookshop, 418 Meridian Street, N. Indianapolis, Ind.
- The Book Scorpion*, Hampshire Book Shop, Northampton, Mass.
- Bookshop Trivia*, Mabel Ulrich's Bookshop, 7 So. 12th Street, Minneapolis.
- Brentano's Book Chat*, 1 W. 47th Street, New York City.
- Fashions of the Hour*, Marshall Field, Chicago, Ill.
- The Horn Book*, Book Shop for Boys and Girls, 270 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass.
- The Jade Elephant*, Their Book Shop, 5 East Pikes Peak, Colorado Springs, Colo.
- Jones' Bookstore News*, Jones' Bookstore, 426 West 6th Street, Los Angeles, Cal.
- Old Corner Book News*, Old Corner Bookstore, 50 Bromfield Street, Boston, Mass.
- Selective Book Notes*, Locust Street Book Shop, 1527 Locust Street, Philadelphia, Pa.
- A Thought or Two on Books and Persons*, Priscilla Guthrie's Bookshop, 516 Penn Place, Pittsburgh, Pa.

In addition to these are the coöperative catalogs issued by The Baker & Taylor Co. and R. R. Bowker Co. Many booksellers distribute these over their individual imprint.

The National Association of Book Publishers, 25 West 33rd Street, New York City, is composed of most of the well-known publishers. It is maintained by them at large expense for the purpose of creating a greater popular demand for books. It endeavours to stimulate public interest through every possible channel—newspaper and magazine publicity, lecture propaganda, country-wide organized book weeks, and endless other schemes. Its advantage to the bookseller, besides creating a greater sale of books, is that it furnishes, free of charge, many helpful

*The
National
Association
of Book
Publishers
and Their
Pamphlets*

pamphlets on book shop methods. It publishes, fortnightly, *Year Round Bookselling News*, also free of charge. It has attractive window cards and postcards. It has placards and other selling bait. As a bookseller, sending your name in to them gives you a right to as much of this material gratis as you care to use. It is an invaluable aid to the progressive bookseller. The pamphlets obtainable are:

Book Shop Accounts and Records.

Book Store Advertising, Publicity and Window Display.

Book Store Arrangement and Display.

Developing the Mail Order Business of the Bookstore.

Opening a Book Department.

Reading List on Bookselling and Publishing.

The Rental Library.

The Successful Book Shop.

CODE OF ETHICS

FOR THE

AMERICAN BOOKSELLERS ASSOCIATION

Adopted by the Convention of the American Booksellers Association, New York, May, 1927.

ARTICLE I

General Declaration

1. A retail bookseller is one who carries a general stock of miscellaneous books exposed for public sale.
2. The business of bookselling is highly honorable and distinctly educational. It is more than the mere bartering of goods.
3. It is the duty of booksellers to maintain the highest ideals, in all of their business relations, that they may be worthy representatives of their craft.

ARTICLE II

The Proprietor, Manager, or Executive Authority

1. The head of the business should be a man of high character and of sound integrity.
2. On the social side he should be kindly, courteous, sympathetic and sincerely friendly.
3. That he may keep informed he should subscribe to the leading trade journals, participate in the local and national trade associations and be alert to utilize new and progressive ideas for the betterment of his service to the public.
4. He should willingly coöperate with others to advance the interests of the book business as a whole.

ARTICLE III

The Relation of the Employer with the Employee

1. The employer shall study the individual qualifications of his employees, so that he may place them in

positions for which they are best fitted and justly promote them as opportunity offers. All promotions or advancements shall be made solely on the basis of merit.

2. Continuance of employment shall be guaranteed for faithful work. The employer shall reward industry, loyalty, ability and unusual effort.

3. The employer shall educate his employees in the technical and practical phases of the book business, not only for their own advancement, but for their increased efficiency in the business.

4. The employer shall instruct his employees as to the correct standards of practice in the conduct of the business, so that the Code of Ethics of the American Booksellers Association shall be carried into effect by every employee.

5. Employing and dismissing shall be on the basis of ability or inability to perform the work desired. The employer shall dismiss any employee who, after admonition, continues to retard the progress of the business by unfortunate temperament, incorrect views on business methods and business relations, or incapability.

6. The employee shall feel that his interest in the success of the business is no less than that of his employer.

7. The employee shall faithfully perform all the duties of his position, earnestly strive to serve the best interests of his employer, loyally maintain the rules and regulations made for his guidance, sincerely support the ethical standards of practice on which the reputation of his employer stands, and be ready at all times to co-operate willingly with his fellow employees in promoting efficiency of operation and high standard of service.

8. Each employee is of value only in proportion to his ability to serve. He shall therefore educate himself and strive to grow in capability for service.

9. The employee shall have the right to take up all questions arising as to hours, wages, conditions, or grievances with department heads and if no agreement can be reached he shall have the privilege of presenting the facts to his employer direct.

ARTICLE IV

Relations with Those from Whom He Purchases

1. Courtesy shall be extended to all salesmen or representatives inquiring for business. The time of salesman shall not be needlessly wasted.

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2. Truth and honesty shall be observed in all interviews. No misleading statements shall be made to secure lower prices.

3. The bookseller shall require a written copy of all terms and conditions of every order placed, and see to it that the terms and conditions are plainly stated, and that the copy delivered to him is an exact copy of that retained by the seller.

4. Close inspection of purchases shall be made by the bookseller. Over count shall be reported as promptly as under count. Any complaint shall be made immediately.

5. Booksellers shall not put new publications on sale before the date of publication as fixed by the publishers. Both honor and ethics are violated when these fixed dates are not strictly observed.

6. It is thoroughly ethical to decline to accept goods delayed in delivery, provided that the publisher is at fault and that acceptance would cause loss to the bookseller.

7. All bills for purchases shall be paid according to specified terms of sale. Discounts for cash can be taken only if payment is made within the time limit specified. When cash discounts are offered, the purchaser shall insist that term of discount begins after the receipt of goods.

Arbitrary adjustment of bills for any cause whatsoever, without notice, is unethical.

8. No one, in his capacity as a buyer, shall accept any personal gratuity, commission, allowance, or any indirect profit in connection with any purchases, and it is unethical for the seller to offer any.

ARTICLE V

Relations with Customers

1. Unfailing courtesy and fair treatment shall be the rule at all times. The bookseller shall not take advantage of the uninformed patron, and shall see that employees are truthful and straightforward. He shall treat the keen and the confiding buyer alike. Remember: "A satisfied patron is the best asset."

2. Advertisements which are false; or have a tendency to mislead; or do not convey the whole truth; or do not conform to business integrity, are unethical.

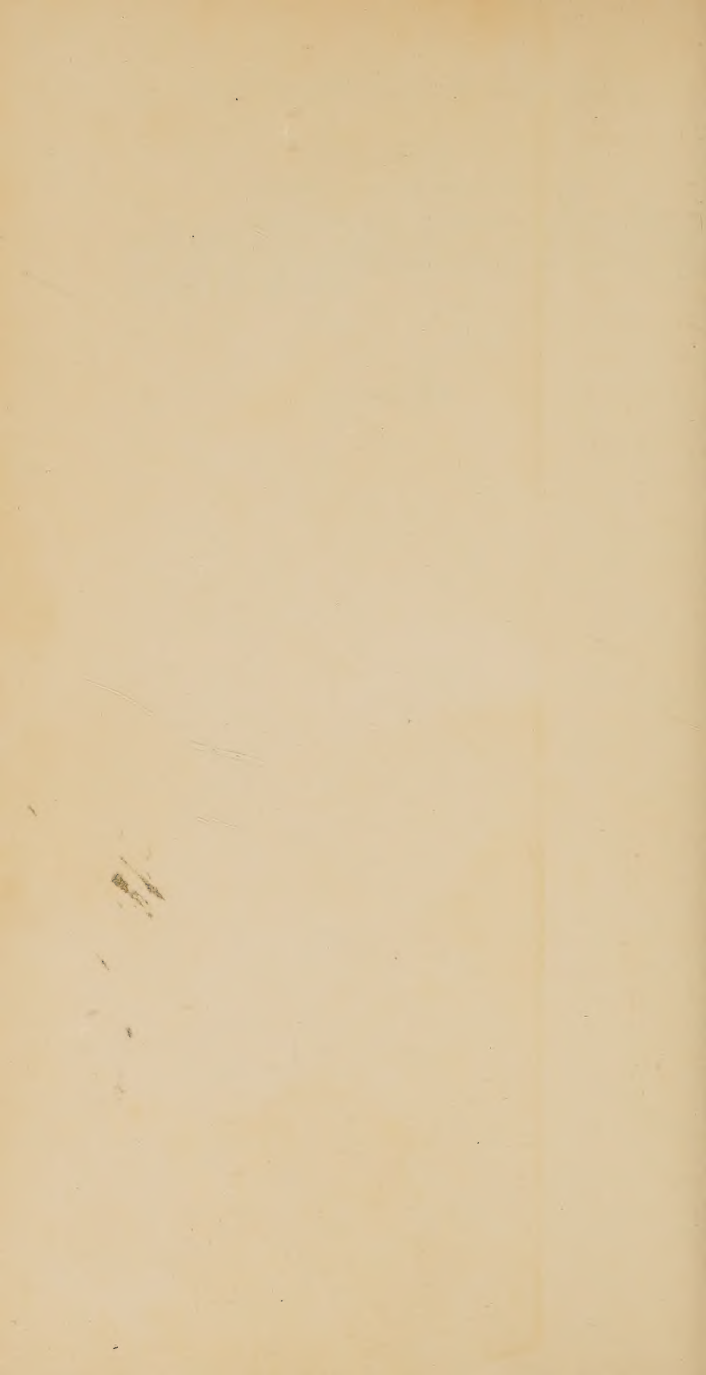
3. Granting a discount to a retail purchaser is bad business practice. This unjustly creates a favoured class and is the first step towards financial disaster.

ARTICLE VI

Obligation to Observe the Code

The adoption of this code by the American Booksellers Association places an obligation on all of its members to a sincere and faithful performance of the rules of conduct here set down.

THE END



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